

# SAINT PAULS.

JULY, 1871.

## WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

*An Autobiographical Story.*

By GEORGE MAC DONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEC FORBES," ETC.

### CHAPTER XXX.

#### PROPOSALS.

MRS. HERBERT attended me during the forenoon, but left me after my early dinner. I made my tea for myself, and a tankard filled from a barrel of ale of my uncle's brewing, with a piece of bread and cheese, was my unvarying supper. The first night I felt very lonely, almost indeed what the Scotch call *erie*. The place, although inseparably interwoven with my earliest recollections, drew back and stood apart from me—a thing to be thought about; and, in the ancient house, amidst the lonely field, I felt like a ghost condemned to return and live the vanished time over again. I had had a fire lighted in my own room; for, although the air was warm outside, the thick stone walls seemed to retain the chilly breath of the last winter. The silent rooms that filled the house forced the sense of their presence upon me. I seemed to see the forsaken things in them staring at each other, hopeless and useless, across the dividing space, as if saying to themselves, "We belong to the dead, are mouldering to the dust after them, and in the dust alone we meet." From the vacant rooms my soul seemed to float out beyond, searching still—to find nothing but loneliness and emptiness betwixt me and the stars; and beyond the stars more loneliness and more emptiness still—no rest for the sole of the foot of the wandering Psyche—save—one mighty saving—an exception which if true must be the one all-absorbing rule. "But," I was saying to myself, "love unknown is not even equal to love lost," when my reverie was broken by the dull noise of a horse's hoofs upon the sward. I rose and went to the window. As I crossed the room,

my brain rather than myself suddenly recalled the night when my pendulum drew from the churning trees the unwelcome genius of the storm. The moment I reached the window—there through the dim summer twilight, once more from the trees, now as still as sleep, came the same figure.

Mr. Coningham saw me at the fire-lighted window, and halted.

"May I be admitted?" he asked ceremoniously.

I made a sign to him to ride round to the door, for I could not speak aloud: it would have been rude to the memories that haunted the silent house.

"May I come in for a few minutes, Mr. Cumbermede?" he asked again, already at the door by the time I had opened it.

"By all means, Mr. Coningham," I replied. "Only you must tie your horse to this ring, for we—I—have no stable here."

"I've done this before," he answered, as he made the animal fast. "I know the ways of the place well enough. But surely you're not here in absolute solitude?"

"Yes, I am. I prefer being alone at present."

"Very unhealthy, I must say! You will grow hypochondriacal if you mope in this fashion," he returned, following me up the stairs to my room.

"A day or two of solitude now and then, would, I suspect, do most people more good than harm," I answered. "But you must not think I intend leading a hermit's life. Have you heard that my aunt——?"

"Yes, yes.—You are left alone in the world. But relations are not a man's only friends—and certainly not always his best friends."

I made no reply, thinking of my uncle.

"I did not know you were down," he resumed. "I was calling at my father's, and seeing your light across the park, thought it possible you might be here, and rode over to see.—May I take the liberty of asking what your plans are?" he added, seating himself by the fire.

"I have hardly had time to form new ones; but I mean to stick to my work anyhow."

"You mean your profession?"

"Yes, if you will allow me to call it such. I have had success enough already to justify me in going on."

"I am more pleased than surprised to hear it," he answered. "But what will you do with the old nest?"

"Let the old nest wait for the old bird, Mr. Coningham—keep it to die in."

"I don't like to hear a young fellow talking that way," he remonstrated. "You've got a long life to live yet—at least I hope so. But if you leave the house untenanted till the period to which you allude, it will be quite unfit by that time even for the small service you propose to require of it. Why not let it—for a term of years? I could find you a tenant, I make no doubt."

"I won't let it. I shall meet the world all the better if I have a place of my own to take refuge in."

"Well, I can't say but there's good in that fancy. To have any spot of your own, however small—freehold, I mean—must be a comfort. At the same time, what's the world for, if you're to meet it in that half-hearted way? I don't mean that every young man—there are exceptions—must sow just so many bushels of *avena fatua*. There are plenty of enjoyments to be got without leading a wild life—which I should be the last to recommend to any young man of principle. Take my advice, and let the place. But pray don't do me the injustice to fancy I came to look after a job. I shall be most happy to serve you."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you," I answered. "If you could let the farm for me for the rest of the lease, of which there are but a few years to run, that would be of great consequence to me. Herbert, my uncle's foreman, who has the management now, is a very good fellow, but I doubt if he will do more than make both ends meet without my aunt, and the accounts would bother me endlessly."

"I shall find out whether Lord Inglewold would be inclined to resume the *fag-end*. In such case, as the lease has been a long one, and land has risen much, he would doubtless pay a part of the difference. Then there's the stock—worth a good deal, I should think. I'll see what can be done. And then there's the stray bit of park?"

"What do you mean by that?" I asked. "We have been in the way of calling it the *park*, though why, I never could tell. I confess it does look like a bit of Sir Giles's that had wandered beyond the gates."

"There is some old story or other about it, I believe. The possessors of the Moldwarp estate have, from time immemorial, regarded it as properly theirs. I know that."

"I am much obliged to them, certainly. I have been in the habit of thinking differently."

"Of course, of course," he rejoined, laughing. "But there may have been some—mistake somewhere. I know Sir Giles would give five times its value for it."

"He should not have it if he offered the Moldwarp estate in exchange," I cried indignantly; and the thought flashed across me that this temptation was what my uncle had feared from the acquaintance of Mr. Coningham.

"Your sincerity will not be put to so great a test as that," he returned, laughing quite merrily. "But I am glad you have such a respect for real property. At the same time—how many acres are there of it?"

"I don't know," I answered curtly and truly.

"It's of no consequence. Only if you don't want to be tempted, don't let Sir Giles or my father broach the subject. You needn't

look at me. I am not Sir Giles's agent. Neither do my father and I run in double harness. He hinted, however, this very day, that he believed the old fool wouldn't stick at £500 an acre for this bit of grass—if he couldn't get it for less."

"If that is what you have come about, Mr. Coningham," I rejoined, haughtily I dare say, for something I could not well define made me feel as if the dignity of a thousand ancestors were perilled in my own, "I beg you will not say another word on the subject, for sell this land I *will not*."

He was looking at me strangely: his eye glittered with what, under other circumstances, I might have taken for satisfaction; but he turned his face away and rose, saying, with a curiously altered tone, as he took up his hat,

"I'm very sorry to have offended you, Mr. Cumberlande. I sincerely beg your pardon. I thought our old—friendship may I not call it?—would have justified me in merely reporting what I had heard. I see now that I was wrong. I ought to have shown more regard for your feelings at this trying time. But again I assure you I was only reporting, and had not the slightest intention of making myself a go-between in the matter. One word more: I have no doubt I could *let* the field for you—at good grazing rental. That I think you can hardly object to."

"I should be much obliged to you," I replied—"for a term of not more than seven years—but without the house, and with the stipulation expressly made that I have right of way in every direction through it."

"Reasonable enough," he answered.

"One thing more," I said: "all these affairs must be pure matters of business between us."

"As you please," he returned, with, I fancied, a shadow of disappointment if not of displeasure on his countenance. "I should have been more gratified if you had accepted a friendly office; but I will do my best for you, notwithstanding."

"I had no intention of being unfriendly, Mr. Coningham," I said. "But when I think of it, I fear I may have been rude, for the bare proposal of selling this Naboth's vineyard of mine would go far to make me rude to any man alive. It sounds like an invitation to dishonour myself in the eyes of my ancestors."

"Ah! you do care about your ancestors?" he said half musingly, and looking into his hat.

"Of course I do! Who is there does not?"

"Only some ninety-nine hundredths of the English nation."

"I cannot well forget," I returned, "what my ancestors have done for me."

"Whereas most people only remember that their ancestors can do no more for them. I declare I am almost glad I offended you. It



does one good to hear a young man speak like that in these degenerate days, when a buck would rather be the son of a rich brewer than a decayed gentleman. I will call again about the end of the week—that is if you will be here—and report progress.”

His manner, as he took his leave, was at once more friendly and more respectful than it had yet been—a change which I attributed to his having discovered in me more firmness than he had expected, in regard, if not of my rights, at least of my social position.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### ARRANGEMENTS.

My custom at this time, and for long after I had finally settled down in the country, was to rise early in the morning—often, as I used when a child, before sunrise, in order to see the first burst of the sun upon the new-born world. I believed then, as I believe still, that, lovely as the sunset is, the sunrise is more full of mystery, poetry, and even, I had almost said, pathos. But often ere he was well up I had begun to imagine what the evening would be like, and with what softly mingled, all but imperceptible gradations it would steal into night. Then when the night came, I would wander about my little field, vainly endeavouring to picture the glory with which the next day's sun would rise upon me. Hence the morning and evening became well known to me; and yet I shrink from saying it, for each is endless in the variety of its change. And the longer I was alone, I became the more enamoured of solitude, with the labour to which, in my case, it was so helpful; and began indeed to be in some danger of losing sight of my relation to “a world of men,” for with that world my imagination and my love for Charley were now my sole recognizable links.

In the fore-part of the day, I read and wrote; and in the after part found both employment and pleasure in arranging my uncle's books, amongst which I came upon a good many treasures whereof I was now able in some measure to appreciate the value—thinking often, amidst their ancient dust and odours, with something like indignant pity, of the splendid collection, as I was sure it must be, mouldering away in utter neglect at the neighbouring Hall.

I was on my knees in the midst of a pile which I had drawn from a cupboard under the shelves, when Mrs. Herbert showed Mr. Coningham in. I was annoyed, for my uncle's room was sacred; but as I was about to take him to my own, I saw such a look of interest upon his face that it turned me aside, and I asked him to take a seat.

“If you do not mind the dust,” I added.

“Mind the dust!” he exclaimed, “—of old books! I count it almost sacred. I am glad you know how to value them.”

What right had he to be glad? How did he know I valued them? How could I but value them? I rebuked my offence, however, and after a little talk about them, in which he revealed much more knowledge than I should have expected, it vanished. He then informed me of an arrangement he and Lord Inglewold's factor had been talking over in respect of the farm; also of an offer he had had for my field. I considered both sufficiently advantageous in my circumstances, and the result was that I closed with both.

A few days after this arrangement, I returned to London, intending to remain for some time. I had a warm welcome from Charley, but could not help fancying an unacknowledged something dividing us. He appeared, notwithstanding, less oppressed, and, in a word, more like other people. I proceeded at once to finish two or three papers and stories, which late events had interrupted. But within a week London had grown to me stifling and unendurable, and I longed unspeakably for the free air of my field, and the loneliness of my small castle. If my reader regard me as already a hypochondriac, the sole disproof I have to offer is, that I was then diligently writing what some years afterwards obtained a hearty reception from the better class of the reading public. Whether my habits were healthy or not, whether my love of solitude was natural or not, I cannot but hope from this that my modes of thinking were. The end was, that, after finishing the work I had on hand, I collected my few belongings, gave up my lodging, bade Charley good-bye, receiving from him a promise to visit me at my own house if possible, and took my farewell of London for a season, determined not to return until I had produced a work which my now more enlarged judgment might consider fit to see the light. I had laid out all my spare money upon books, with which in a few heavy trunks I now went back to my solitary dwelling. I had no care upon my mind, for my small fortune along with the rent of my field was more than sufficient for my maintenance in the almost anchoritic seclusion in which I intended to live, and hence I had every advantage for the more definite projection and prosecution of a work which had been gradually shaping itself in my mind for months past.

Before leaving for London, I had already spoken to a handy lad employed upon the farm, and he had kept himself free to enter my service when I should require him. He was the more necessary to me that I still had my mare Lillith, from which nothing but fate should ever part me. I had no difficulty in arranging with the new tenant for her continued accommodation at the farm; while, as Herbert still managed its affairs, the services of his wife were available as often as I required them. But my man soon made himself capable of doing everything for me, and proved himself perfectly trustworthy.

I must find a name for my place—for its own I will not write: let

me call it *The Moat*: there were signs, plain enough to me after my return from Oxford, that there had once been a moat about it, of which the hollow I have mentioned as the spot where I used to lie and watch for the sun's first rays, had evidently been a part. But the remains of the moat lay at a considerable distance from the house, suggesting a large area of building at some former period, proof of which, however, had entirely vanished, the house bearing every sign of a narrow completeness.

The work I had undertaken required a constantly recurring reference to books of the sixteenth century; and although I had provided as many as I thought I should need, I soon found them insufficient. My uncle's library was very large for a man in his position, but it was not by any means equally developed; and my necessities made me think often of the old library at the Hall, which might contain somewhere in its ruins every book I wanted. Not only, however, would it have been useless to go searching in the formless mass for this or that volume, but, unable to grant Sir Giles the desire of his heart in respect of my poor field, I did not care to ask of him the comparatively small favour of being allowed to burrow in his dust-heap of literature.

I was sitting, one hot noon, almost in despair over a certain little point concerning which I could find no definite information, when Mr. Coningham called. After some business matters had been discussed, I mentioned, merely for the sake of talk, the difficulty I was in—the sole disadvantage of a residence in the country as compared with London, where the British Museum was the unfailing resort of all who required such aid as I was in want of.

"But there is the library at Moldwarp Hall," he said.

"Yes, *there* it is; but there is not *here*."

"I have no doubt Sir Giles would make you welcome to borrow what books you wanted. He is a good-natured man, Sir Giles."

I explained my reason for not troubling him.

"Besides," I added, "the library is in such absolute chaos, that I might with less loss of time run up to London, and find any volume I happened to want among the old-book-shops. You have no idea what a mess Sir Giles's books are in—scarcely two volumes of the same book to be found even in proximity. It is one of the most painful sights I ever saw."

He said little more, but from what followed, I suspect either he or his father spoke to Sir Giles on the subject; for, one day, as I was walking past the park-gates, which I had seldom entered since my return, I saw him just within, talking to old Mr. Coningham. I saluted him in passing, and he not only returned the salutation in a friendly manner, but made a step towards me as if he wished to speak to me. I turned and approached him. He came out, and shook hands with me.

"I know who you are, Mr. Cumbermede, although I have never had the pleasure of speaking to you before," he said frankly.

"There you are mistaken, Sir Giles," I returned; "but you could hardly be expected to remember the little boy who, many years ago, having stolen one of your apples, came to you to comfort him."

He laughed heartily.

"I remember the circumstance well," he said. "And you were that unhappy culprit? Ha! ha! ha! To tell the truth, I have thought of it many times. It was a remarkably fine thing to do."

"What! steal the apple, Sir Giles?"

"Make the instant reparation you did."

"There was no reparation in asking you to box my ears."

"It was all you could do, though."

"To ease my own conscience, it was. There is always a satisfaction, I suppose, in suffering for your sins. But I have thought a thousand times of your kindness in shaking hands with me instead. You treated me as the angels treat the repentant sinner, Sir Giles."

"Well, I certainly never thought of it in that light," he said; then, as if wishing to change the subject,—"Don't you find it lonely now your uncle is gone?" he asked.

"I miss him more than I can tell."

"A very worthy man he was—too good for this world by all accounts."

"He's not the worse off for that now, Sir Giles, I trust."

"No; of course not," he returned quickly, with the usual shrinking from slightest allusion to what is called the other world.—"Is there anything I can do for you? You are a literary man, they tell me. There are a good many books of one sort and another lying at the Hall. Some of them might be of use to you. They are at your service. I am sure you are to be trusted even with mouldy books, which from what I hear must be a greater temptation to you now than red-cheeked apples," he added with another merry laugh.

"I will tell you what, Sir Giles," I answered. "It has often grieved me to think of the state of your library. It would be scarcely possible for me to find a book in it now. But if you would trust me, I should be delighted, in my spare hours, of which I can command a good many, to put the whole in order for you."

"I should be under the greatest obligation. I have always intended having some capable man down from London to arrange it. I am no great reader myself, but I have the highest respect for a good library. It ought never to have got into the condition in which I found it."

"The books are fast going to ruin, I fear."

"Are they indeed?" he exclaimed, with some consternation. "I was not in the least aware of that. I thought so long as I let no one meddle with them, they were safe enough."

"The law of the moth and rust holds with books as well as other unused things," I answered.

"Then, pray, my dear sir, undertake the thing at once," he said, in a tone to which the uneasiness of self-reproach gave a touch of imperiousness. "But really," he added, "it seems trespassing on your goodness much too far. Your time is valuable. Would it be a long job?"

"It would doubtless take some months; but the pleasure of seeing order dawn from confusion would itself repay me. And I *might* come upon certain books of which I am greatly in want. You will have to allow me a carpenter though, for the shelves are not half sufficient to hold the books; and I have no doubt those there are stand in need of repair."

I have a carpenter amongst my people. Old houses want constant attention. I shall put him under your orders with pleasure. Come and dine with me to-morrow, and we'll talk it all over."

"You are very kind," I said. "Is Mr. Brotherton at home?"

"I am sorry to say he is not."

"I heard the other day that he had sold his commission."

"Yes—six months ago. His regiment was ordered to India, and—  
and—his mother—— But he does not give us much of his company," added the old man. "I am sorry he is not at home, for he would have been glad to meet you."

Instead of responding, I merely made haste to accept Sir Giles's invitation. I confess I did not altogether relish having anything to do with the future property of Geoffrey Brotherton; but the attraction of the books was great, and in any case I should be under no obligation to him; neither was the nature of the service I was about to render him such as would awaken any sense of obligation in a mind like his.

I could not help recalling the sarcastic criticisms of Clara when I entered the drawing-room of Moldwarp Hall—a long, low-ceiled room, with its walls and stools and chairs covered with tapestry, some of it the work of the needle, other some of the Gobelin loom; but although I found Lady Brotherton a common enough old lady, who showed little of the dignity of which she evidently thought much, and was more condescending to her yeoman neighbour than was agreeable, I did not at once discover ground for the severity of those remarks. Miss Brotherton, the eldest of the family, a long-necked lady, the flower of whose youth was beginning to curl at the edges, I found well-read, but whether in books or the reviews of them, I had to leave an open question as yet. Nor was I sufficiently taken with her not to feel considerably dismayed when she proffered me her assistance in arranging the library. I made no objection at the time, only hinting that the drawing up of a catalogue afterwards might be a fitter employment for her fair fingers; but I resolved to create such a fearful

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pother at the very beginning, that her first visit should be her last. And so I doubt not it would have fallen out, but for something else. The only other person who dined with us, was a Miss Pease—at least so I will call her—who, although the law of her existence appeared to be fetching and carrying for Lady Brotherton, was yet in virtue of a poor-relationship, allowed an uneasy seat at the table. Her obedience was mechanically perfect. One wondered how the mere nerves of volition could act so instantaneously upon the slightest hint. I saw her more than once or twice withdraw her fork when almost at her lips, and, almost before she had laid it down, rise from her seat to obey some half-whispered half-nodded behest. But her look was one of injured meekness and self-humbled submission. Sir Giles now and then gave her a kind or merry word, but she would reply to it with almost abject humility. Her face was gray and pinched, her eyes were very cold, and she ate as if she did not know one thing from another.

Over our wine, Sir Giles introduced business. I professed myself ready, with a housemaid and carpenter at my orders when I should want them, to commence operations the following afternoon. He begged me to ask for whatever I might want, and after a little friendly chat, I took my leave, elated with the prospect of the work before me. About three o'clock the next afternoon, I took my way to the Hall to assume the temporary office of creative librarian.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

### PREPARATIONS.

It was a lovely afternoon, the air hot, and the shadows of the trees dark upon the green grass. The clear sun was shining sideways on the little oriel window of one of the rooms in which my labour awaited me. Never have I seen a picture of more stately repose than the huge pile of building presented, while the curious vane on the central square tower glittered like the outburning flame of its hidden life. The only objection I could find to it was that it stood isolated from its own park, although the portion next it was kept as trim as the smoothest lawn. There was not a door anywhere to be seen except the two gateway entrances, and not a window upon the ground floor. All the doors and low windows were either within the courts, or opened on the garden which, with its terraced walks and avenues and one tiny lawn, surrounded the two further sides of the house, and was itself enclosed by walls.

I knew the readiest way to the library well enough: once admitted at the outer gate, I had no occasion to trouble the servants. The rooms containing the books were amongst the bedrooms, and after crossing the great hall, I had to turn my back on the stair which led

to the ball-room and drawing-room, and ascend another to the left, so that I could come and go with little chance of meeting any of the family.

The rooms, I have said, were six, none of them of any great size, and all ill-fitted for the purpose. In fact, there was such a sense of confinement about the whole arrangement as gave me the feeling that any difficult book read there would be unintelligible. Order, however, is only another kind of light, and would do much to destroy the impression. Having with practical intent surveyed the situation, I saw there was no space for action. I must have at least the temporary use of another room.

Observing that the last of the suite of book-rooms farthest from the armoury had still a door into the room beyond, I proceeded to try it, thinking to know at a glance whether it would suit me, and whether it was likely to be yielded for my purpose. It opened, and, to my dismay, there stood Clara Coningham, fastening her collar. She looked sharply round, and made a half-indignant step towards me.

"I beg your pardon a thousand times, Miss Coningham," I exclaimed. "Will you allow me to explain, or must I retreat unheard?"

I was vexed indeed, for, notwithstanding a certain flutter at the heart, I had no wish to renew my acquaintance with her.

"There must be some fatality about the place, Mr. Cumbermede!" she said, almost with her old merry laugh. "It frightens me."

"Precisely my own feeling, Miss Coningham. I had no idea you were in the neighbourhood."

"I cannot say so much as that; for I had heard you were at The Moat; but I had no expectation of seeing you—least of all in this house. I suppose you are on the scent of some musty old book or other," she added, approaching the door where I stood with the handle in my hand.

"My object is an invasion rather than a hunt," I said, drawing back that she might enter.

"Just as it was, the last time you and I were here!" she went on, with scarcely a pause, and as easily as if there had never been any misunderstanding between us.

I had thought myself beyond any further influence from her fascinations, but when I looked in her beautiful face, and heard her allude to the past with so much friendliness, and such apparent unconsciousness of any reason for forgetting it, a tremor ran through me from head to foot. I mastered myself sufficiently to reply, however.

"It is the last time you will see it so," I said; "for here stands the Hercules of the stable—about to restore it to cleanliness, and what is of far more consequence in a library—to order!"

"You don't mean it!" she exclaimed with genuine surprise.  
"I'm so glad I'm here!"

"Are you on a visit then?"

"Indeed I am; though how it came about I don't know. I dare say my father does. Lady Brotherton has invited me, stiffly of course, to spend a few weeks during their stay. Sir Giles must be in it: I believe I am rather a favourite with the good old man. But I have another fancy: my grandfather is getting old; I suspect my father has been making himself useful, and this invitation is an acknowledgment. Men always buttress their ill-built dignities by keeping poor women in the dark; by which means you drive us to infinite conjecture. That is how we come to be so much cleverer than you at putting two and two together, and making five."

"But," I ventured to remark, "under such circumstances, you will hardly enjoy your visit."

"Oh! shan't I? I shall get fun enough out of it for that. They are—all but Sir Giles—they are great fun. Of course they don't treat me as an equal, but I take it out in amusement. You will find you have to do the same."

"Not I. I have nothing to do with them. I am here as a skilled workman—one whose work is his sufficient reward. There is nothing degrading in that—is there? If I thought there was, of course, I shouldn't come."

"You *never* did anything you felt degrading?"

"No."

"Happy mortal!" she said, with a sigh—whether humorous or real, I could not tell.

"I have had no occasion," I returned.

"And yet, as I hear, you have made your mark in literature?"

"Who says that? I should not."

"Never mind," she rejoined, with, as I fancied, the look of having said more than she ought. "But," she added, "I wish you would tell me in what periodicals you write."

"You must excuse me. I do not wish to be first known in connection with fugitive things. When first I publish a book, you may be assured my name will be on the title-page. Meantime, I must fulfil the conditions of my *entrée*."

"And I must go and pay my respects to Lady Brotherton. I have only just arrived."

"Won't you find it dull? There's nobody of man-kind at home but Sir Giles."

"You are unjust. If Mr. Brotherton had been here, I shouldn't have come. I find him troublesome."

I thought she blushed, notwithstanding the air of freedom with which she spoke.



"If he should come into the property to-morrow," she went on, "I fear you would have little chance of completing your work."

"If he came into the property this day six months, I fear he would find it unfinished. Certainly what was to do should remain undone."

"Don't be too sure of that. He might win you over. He can talk."

"I should not be so readily pleased as another might."

She bent towards me, and said in an almost hissing whisper—

"Wilfrid, I hate him!"

I started. She looked what she said. The blood shot to my heart, and again rushed to my face. But suddenly she retreated into her own room, and noiselessly closed the door. The same moment I heard that of a further room open, and presently Miss Brotherton peeped in.

"How do you do, Mr. Cumbermede?" she said. "You are already hard at work, I see."

I was in fact, doing nothing. I explained that I could not make a commencement without the use of another room.

"I will send the housekeeper, and you can arrange with her," she said, and left me.

In a few minutes Mrs. Wilson entered. Her manner was more stiff and formal than ever. We shook hands in a rather limp fashion.

"You've got your will at last, Mr. Cumbermede," she said. "I suppose the thing's to be done!"

"It is, Mrs. Wilson, I am happy to say. Sir Giles kindly offered me the use of the library, and I took the liberty of representing to him that there was no library until the books were arranged."

"Why couldn't you take a book away with you and read it in comfort at home?"

"How could I take the book home if I couldn't find it?"

"You could find something worth reading, if that were all you wanted."

"But that is not all. I have plenty of reading."

"Then I don't see what's the good of it."

"Books are very much like people, Mrs. Wilson. There are not so many you want to know all about; but most could tell you things you don't know. I want certain books in order to question them about certain things."

"Well, all I know is, it'll be more trouble than it's worth."

"I am afraid it will—to you, Mrs. Wilson; but though I am taking a thousand times your trouble, I expect to be well repaid for it."

"I have no doubt of that. Sir Giles is a liberal gentleman."

"You don't suppose *he* is going to pay me, Mrs. Wilson?"

"Who else should?"

"Why, the books themselves, of course."

Evidently she thought I was making game of her, for she was silent.

"Will you show me which room I can have?" I said. "It must be as near this one as possible. Is the next particularly wanted?" I asked, pointing to the door which led into Clara's room.

She went to it quickly, and opened it far enough to put her hand in and take the key from the other side, which she then inserted on my side, turned in the lock, drew out, and put in her pocket.

"That room is otherwise engaged," she said. "You must be content with one across the corridor."

"Very well—if it is not far. I should make slow work of it, if I had to carry the books a long way."

"You can have one of the footmen to help you," she said, apparently relenting.

"No, thank you," I answered. "I will have no one touch the books but myself."

"I will show you one which I think will suit your purpose," she said, leading the way.

It was nearly opposite—a bedroom, sparsely furnished.

"Thank you. This will do—if you will order all the things to be piled in that corner."

She stood silent for a few moments, evidently annoyed, then turned and left the room, saying,

"I will see to it, Mr. Cumbermede."

Returning to the books and pulling off my coat, I had soon compelled such a cloud of very ancient and smothering dust, that when Miss Brotherton again made her appearance, her figure showed dim through the thick air, as she stood—dismayed I hoped—in the doorway. I pretended to be unaware of her presence, and went on beating and blowing, causing yet thicker volumes of solid vapour to clothe my presence. She withdrew without even an attempt at parley.

Having heaped several great piles near the door, each composed of books of nearly the same size, the first rudimentary approach to arrangement, I crossed to the other room to see what progress had been made. To my surprise and annoyance, I found nothing had been done. Determined not to have my work impeded by the remissness of the servants, and seeing I must place myself at once on a proper footing in the house, I went to the drawing-room to ascertain, if possible, where Sir Giles was. I had of course put on my coat, but having no means of ablution at hand, I must have presented a very unpresentable appearance when I entered. Lady Brotherton half rose, in evident surprise at my intrusion, but at once resumed her seat, saying, as she turned her chair half towards the window where the other two ladies sat,

"The housekeeper will attend to you, Mr. Cumbermede—or the butler."

I could see that Clara was making inward merriment over my appearance and reception.

"Could you tell me, Lady Brotherton," I said, "where I should be likely to find Sir Giles?"

"I can give you no information on that point," she answered, with consummate stiffness.

"I know where he is," said Clara, rising. "I will take you to him. He is in the study."

She took no heed of the glance broadly thrown at her, but approached the door.

I opened it, and followed her out of the room. As soon as we were beyond hearing, she burst out laughing.

"How dared you show your workman's face in that drawing-room?" she said. "I am afraid you have much offended her ladyship."

"I hope it is for the last time. When I am properly attended to, I shall have no occasion to trouble her."

She led me to Sir Giles's study. Except newspapers and reports of companies, there was in it nothing printed. He rose when we entered, and came towards us.

"Looking like your work already, Mr. Cumbermede!" he said, holding out his hand.

"I must not shake hands with you this time, Sir Giles," I returned. "But I am compelled to trouble you. I can't get on for want of attendance. I *must* have a little help."

I told him how things were. His rosy face grew rosier, and he rang the bell angrily. The butler answered it.

"Send Mrs. Wilson here. And I beg, Hurst, you will see that Mr. Cumbermede has every attention."

Mrs. Wilson presently made her appearance, and stood with a flushed face before her master.

"Let Mr. Cumbermede's orders be attended to *at once*, Mrs. Wilson."

"Yes, Sir Giles," she answered, and waited.

"I am greatly obliged to you for letting me know," he added, turning to me. "Pray insist upon proper attention."

"Thank you, Sir Giles. I shall not scruple."

"That will do, Mrs. Wilson. You must not let Mr. Cumbermede be hampered in his kind labours for my benefit by the idleness of my servants."

The housekeeper left the room, and after a little chat with Sir Giles, I went back to the books. Clara had followed Mrs. Wilson, partly, I suspect, for the sake of enjoying her confusion.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## ASSISTANCE.

I RETURNED to my solitary house as soon as the evening began to grow too dark for my work, which, from the lowness of the windows and the age of the glass, was early. All the way as I went, I was thinking of Clara. Not only had time somewhat obliterated the last impression she had made upon me, but I had, partly from the infection of Charley's manner, long ago stumbled upon various excuses for her conduct. Now I said to myself that she had certainly a look of greater sedateness than before. But her expression of dislike to Geoffrey Brotherton had more effect upon me than anything else, inasmuch as there Vanity found room for the soles of both her absurdly small feet; and that evening, when I went wandering, after my custom, with a volume of Dante in my hand, the book remained unopened, and from the form of Clara flowed influences mingling with and gathering fresh power from those of Nature, whose feminine front now brooded over me half-withdrawn in the dim, starry night. I remember that night so well! I can recall it now with a calmness equal to its own. Indeed in my memory it seems to belong to my mind as much as to the outer world; or rather the night filled both, forming the space in which my thoughts moved, as well as the space in which the brilliant thread of the sun-lighted crescent hung clasping the earth-lighted bulk of the moon. I wandered in the grass until midnight was long by, feeling as quietly and peacefully at home as if my head had been on the pillow and my soul out in a lovely dream of cool delight. We lose much even by the good habits we form. What tender and glorious changes pass over our sleeping heads unseen! What moons rise and set in rippled seas of cloud or behind hills of stormy vapour while we are blind! What storms roll thundering across the airy vault, with no eyes for their keen lightnings to dazzle, while we dream of the dead who will not speak to us! But ah! I little thought to what a dungeon of gloom this lovely night was the jasmine-grown porch!

The next morning I was glad to think that there was no wolf at my door, howling *work—work!* Moldwarp Hall drew me with redoubled attraction; and instead of waiting for the afternoon, which alone I had intended to occupy with my new undertaking, I set out to cross the park the moment I had finished my late breakfast. Nor could I conceal from myself that it was quite as much for the chance of seeing Clara now and then as from pleasure in the prospect of an ordered library that I repaired thus early to the Hall. In the morning light, however, I began to suspect as I walked, that, although Clara's frankness was flattering, it was rather a sign that she was heartwhole towards me than that she was careless of Brotherton. I began to

doubt also whether, after our first meeting, which she had carried off so well—cool even to kindness, she would care to remember that I was in the house, or derive from it any satisfaction beyond what came of the increased chances of studying the Brothertons from a humorous point of view. Then, after all, why was she there?—and apparently on such familiar terms with a family socially so far superior to her own? The result of my cogitations was the resolution to take care of myself. But it had vanished utterly before the day was two hours older. A youth's wise talk to himself will not make him a wise man, any more than the experience of the father will serve the son's need.

I was hard at work in my shirt-sleeves, carrying an armful of books across the corridor, and thinking whether I had not better bring my servant with me in the afternoon, when Clara came out of her room.

"Here already, Wilfrid!" she exclaimed. "Why don't you have some of the servants to help you? You're doing what any one might as well do for you."

"If these were handsomely bound," I answered, "I should not so much mind; but being old and tattered, no one ought to touch them who does not love them."

"Then, I suppose, you wouldn't trust me with them either, for I cannot pretend to anything beyond a second-hand respect for them."

"What do you mean by a second-hand respect?" I asked.

"I mean such respect as comes from seeing that a scholar like you respects them."

"Then I think I could accord you a second-hand sort of trust—under my own eye, that is," I answered, laughing. "But you can scarcely leave your hostess to help me."

"I will ask Miss Brotherton to come too. She will pretend all the respect you desire."

"I made three times the necessary dust in order to frighten her away yesterday."

"Ah! that's a pity. But I shall manage to overrule her objections—that is, if you would really like two tolerably educated housemaids to help you."

"I will gladly endure one of them for the sake of the other," I replied.

"No compliments, please," she returned, and left the room.

In about half an hour she reappeared, accompanied by Miss Brotherton. They were in white wrappers, with their dresses shortened a little, and their hair tucked under mob caps. Miss Brotherton looked like a lady's-maid, Clara like a lady acting a lady's-maid. I assumed the command at once, pointing out to what heaps in the other room those I had grouped in this were to be added, and giving strict injunctions as to carrying only a few at once, and laying them down

with care in regularly ordered piles. Clara obeyed with a mock submission, Miss Brotherton with a reserve which heightened the impression of her dress. I was instinctively careful how I spoke to Clara, fearing to compromise her, but she seemed all at once to change her rôle, and began to propose, object, and even insist upon her own way, drawing from me the threat of immediate dismissal from my service, at which her companion laughed with an awkwardness showing she regarded the pleasantry as a presumption. Before one o'clock, the first room was almost empty. Then the great bell rang, and Clara, coming from the auxiliary chamber, put her head in at the door.

"Won't you come to luncheon?" she said, with a sly archness, looking none the less bewitching for a smudge or two on her lovely face, or the blackness of the delicate hands which she held up like two paws for my admiration.

"In the servants' hall?—Workmen don't sit down with ladies and gentlemen. Did Miss Brotherton send you to ask me?"

She shook her head.

"Then you had better come and lunch with me."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"I hope you will *some* day honour my little fragment of a house. It is a curious old place," I said.

"I don't like musty old places," she replied.

"But I have heard you speak with no little admiration of the Hall: some parts of it are older than my sentry-box."

"I can't say I admire it at all as a place to live in," she answered curtly.

"But I was not asking you to live in mine," I said—foolishly arguing.

She looked annoyed, whether with herself or me I could not tell, but instantly answered,

"Some day—when I can without—— But I must go and make myself tidy, or Miss Brotherton will be fancying I have been talking to you!"

"And what have you been doing then?"

"Only asking you to come to lunch."

"Will you tell her that?"

"Yes—if she says anything."

"Then you *had* better make haste and be asked no questions."

She glided away. I threw on my coat, and re-crossed the park.

But I was so eager to see again the fair face in the mob cap, that, although not at all certain of its reappearance, I told my man to go at once and bring the mare. He made haste, and by the time I had finished my dinner, she was at the door. I gave her the rein, and two or three minutes brought me back to the Hall, where, having stabled her, I was at my post again, I believe, before they had finished luncheon. I had a great heap of books ready in the second room

to carry into the first, and had almost concluded they would not come, when I heard their voices—and presently they entered, but not in their mob caps.

"What an unmerciful master you are!" said Clara, looking at the heap. "I thought you had gone home to lunch."

"I went home to dinner," I said. "I get more out of the day by dining early."

"How is that, Mr. Cumbermede?" asked Miss Brotherton, with a nearer approach to cordiality than she had yet shown.

"I think the evening the best part of the day—too good to spend in eating and drinking."

"But," said Clara, quite gravely, "are not those the chief ends of existence?"

"Your friend is satirical, Miss Brotherton," I remarked.

"At least, you are not of her opinion, to judge by the time you have taken," she returned.

"I have been back nearly an hour," I said. "Workmen don't take long over their meals."

"Well, I suppose you don't want any more of us now," said Clara. "You will arrange the books you bring from the next room upon these empty shelves, I presume."

"No, not yet. I must not begin that until I have cleared the very last, got it thoroughly cleaned, the shelves seen to, and others put up."

"What a tremendous labour you have undertaken, Mr. Cumbermede!" said Miss Brotherton. "I am quite ashamed you should do so much for us."

"I, on the contrary, am delighted to be of any service to Sir Giles."

"But you don't expect us to slave all day as we did in the morning?" said Clara.

"Certainly not, Miss Coningham. I am too grateful to be exacting."

"Thank you for that pretty speech. Come, then, Miss Brotherton, we must have a walk. We haven't been out of doors to-day."

"Really, Miss Coningham, I think the least we can do is to help Mr. Cumbermede to our small ability."

"Nonsense!"—(Miss Brotherton positively started at the word.) "Any two of the maids or men would serve his purpose better, if he did not affect fastidiousness. We shan't be allowed to come to-morrow if we overdo it to-day."

Miss Brotherton was evidently on the point of saying something indignant, but yielded notwithstanding, and I was left alone once more. Again I laboured until the shadows grew thick around the gloomy walls. As I galloped home, I caught sight of my late companions coming across the park; and I trust I shall not be hardly judged if I confess that I did sit straighter in my saddle, and mind my seat better. Thus ended my second day's work at the library of Moldwarp Hall.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## AN EXPOSTULATION.

NEITHER of the ladies came to me the next morning. As far as my work was concerned, I was in considerably less need of their assistance, for it lay only between two rooms opening into each other. Nor did I feel any great disappointment, for so long as a man has something to do, expectation is pleasure enough, and will continue such for a long time. It is those who are unemployed to whom expectation becomes an agony. I went home to my solitary dinner almost resolved to return to my original plan of going only in the afternoons.

I was not thoroughly in love with Clara; but it was certainly the hope of seeing her, and not the pleasure of handling the dusty books that drew me back to the library that afternoon. I had got rather tired of the whole affair in the morning. It was very hot, and the dust was choking, and of the volumes I opened as they passed through my hands, not one was of the slightest interest to me. But for the chance of seeing Clara I should have lain in the grass instead.

No one came. I grew weary, and for a change retreated into the armoury. Evidently, not the slightest heed was paid to the weapons now, and I was thinking with myself that when I had got the books in order, I might give a few days to furbishing and oiling them, when the door from the gallery opened, and Clara entered.

"What! a truant?" she said.

"You take accusation at least by the forelock, Clara. Who is the real truant now—if I may suggest a mistake?"

"I never undertook anything. How many guesses have you made as to the cause of your desertion to-day?"

"Well, three or four."

"Have you made one as to the cause of Miss Brotherton's graciousness to you yesterday?"

"At least I remarked the change."

"I will tell you. There was a short notice of some of your writings in a certain magazine which I contrived should fall in her way."

"Impossible!" I exclaimed. "I have never put my name to anything."

"But you have put the same name to all your contributions."

"How should the reviewer know it meant me?"

"Your own name was never mentioned."

I thought she looked a little confused as she said this.

"Then how should Miss Brotherton know it meant me?"

She hesitated a moment—then answered:

"Perhaps from internal evidence.—I suppose I must confess I told her."



"Then how did *you* know?"

"I have been one of your readers for a long time."

"But how did you come to know my work?"

"That has oozed out."

"Some one must have told you," I said.

"That is my secret," she replied, with the air of making it a mystery in order to tease me.

"It must be all a mistake," I said. "Show me the magazine."

"As you won't take my word for it, I won't."

"Well, I shall soon find out. There is but one could have done it. It is very kind of him, no doubt; but I don't like it. That kind of thing should come of itself—not through friends."

"Who do you fancy has done it?"

"If you have a secret, so have I."

My answer seemed to relieve her, though I could not tell what gave me the impression.

"You are welcome to yours, and I will keep mine," she said. "I only wanted to explain Miss Brotherton's condescension yesterday."

"I thought you had been going to explain why you didn't come to-day."

"That is only a reaction. I have no doubt she thinks she went too far yesterday."

"That is absurd. She was civil; that was all."

"In reading your thermometer, you must know its zero first," she replied sententiously.—"Is the sword you call yours there still?"

"Yes, and I call it mine still."

"Why don't you take it then? I should have carried it off long ago."

"To steal my own would be to prejudice my right," I returned. "But I have often thought of telling Sir Giles about it."

"Why don't you then?"

"I hardly know. My head has been full of other things, and any time will do. But I should like to see it in its own place once more."

I had taken it from the wall, and now handed it to her.

"Is this it?" she said carelessly.

"It is—just as it was carried off my bed that night."

"What room were you in?" she asked, trying to draw it from the sheath.

"I can't tell. I've never been in it since."

"You don't seem to me to have the curiosity natural to a——"

"To a woman—no," I said.

"To a man of spirit," she retorted, with an appearance of indignation. "I don't believe you can tell even how it came into your possession!"

"Why shouldn't it have been in the family from time immemorial?"

"So!—And you don't care either to recover it, or to find out how you lost it!"

"How can I? Where is Mr. Close?"

"Why, dead—years and years ago!"

"So I understood. I can't well apply to him then,—and I am certain no one else knows."

"Don't be too sure of that. Perhaps Sir Giles——"

"I am positive Sir Giles knows nothing about it."

"I have reason to think the story is not altogether unknown in the family."

"Have you told it then?"

"No. But I *have* heard it alluded to."

"By Sir Giles?"

"No."

"By whom then?"

"I will answer no more questions."

"Geoffrey, I suppose?"

"You are not polite. Do you suppose I am bound to tell you all I know?"

"Not by any means. Only, you oughtn't to pique a curiosity you don't mean to satisfy."

"But if I'm not at liberty to say more?—All I meant to say was, that if I were you, I *would* get back that sword."

"You hint at a secret, and yet suppose I could carry off its object as I might a rusty nail which any passer-by would be made welcome to!"

"You might take it first, and mention the thing to Sir Giles afterwards."

"Why not mention it first?"

"Only on the supposition you had not the courage to claim it."

"In that case I certainly shouldn't have the courage to avow the deed afterwards. I don't understand you, Clara."

She laughed.

"That is always your way," she said. "You take everything so seriously! Why couldn't I make a proposition without being supposed to mean it?"

I was not satisfied. There was something short of uprightness in the whole tone of her attempted persuasion—which indeed I could hardly believe to have been so lightly intended as she now suggested. The effect on my feeling for her was that of a slight frost on the spring blossoms.

She had been examining the hilt with a look of interest, and was now for the third time trying to draw the blade from the sheath.

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"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."

"It's no use, Clara," I said. "It has been too many years glued to the scabbard."

"Glued!" she echoed. "What do you mean?"

I did not reply. An expression almost of horror shadowed her face, and at the same moment, to my astonishment, she drew it half-way.

"Why! you enchantress!" I exclaimed. "I never saw so much of it before. It is wonderfully bright—when one thinks of the years it has been shut in darkness."

She handed it to me as it was, saying,

"If that weapon was mine, I should never rest until I had found out everything concerning it."

"That is easily said, Clara; but how can I? My uncle knew nothing about it. My grandmother did, no doubt, but almost all I can remember her saying was something about my great-grandfather and Sir Marmaduke."

As I spoke, I tried to draw it entirely, but it would yield no farther. I then sought to replace it, but it would not move. That it had yielded to Clara's touch gave it a fresh interest and value.

"I was sure it had a history," said Clara. "Have you no family papers? Your house you say is nearly as old as this: are there no papers of *any* kind in it?"

"Yes, a few," I answered—"the lease of the farm—and——"

"Oh! rubbish!" she said. "Isn't the house your own?"

"Yes."

"And have you ever thoroughly searched it?"

"I haven't had time yet."

"Not had time!" she repeated, in a tone of something so like the uttermost contempt that I was bewildered.

"I mean some day or other to have a rummage in the old lumber-room," I said.

"Well, I do think that is the least you can do—if only out of respect to your ancestors. Depend on it, they don't like to be forgotten any more than other people."

The intention I had just announced was however but just born of her words. I had never yet searched even my grandmother's bureau, and had but this very moment fancied there might be papers in some old chest in the lumber-room. That room had already begun to occupy my thoughts from another point of view, and hence, in part, no doubt the suggestion. I was anxious to have a visit from Charley. He might bring with him some of our London friends. There was absolutely no common room in the house except the hall-kitchen. The room we had always called the lumber-room was over it, and nearly as large. It had a tall stone chimney-piece, elaborately carved, and clearly had once been a room for entertainment. The idea of restoring it to its original dignity arose in my mind; and

I hoped that, furnished after as antique a fashion as I could compass, it would prove a fine room. The windows were small, to be sure, and the pitch rather low, but the whitewashed walls were panelled, and I had some hopes of the ceiling.

"Who knows," I said to myself, as I walked home that evening, "but I may come upon papers? I do remember something in the farthest corner that looks like a great chest."

Little more had passed between us, but Clara left me with the old dissatisfaction beginning to turn itself, as if about to awake once more. For the present I hung the half-naked blade upon the wall, for I dared not force it lest the scabbard should go to pieces.

When I reached home, I found a letter from Charley, to the effect that, if convenient, he would pay me a visit the following week. His mother and sister, he said, had been invited to Moldwarp Hall. His father was on the continent for his health. Without having consulted them on the matter, which might involve them in after difficulty, he would come to me, and so have an opportunity of seeing them in the sunshine of his father's absence. I wrote at once that I should be delighted to receive him.

The next morning I spent with my man in the lumber-room; and before mid-day the rest of the house looked like an old curiosity shop—it was so littered with odds and ends of dust-bloomed antiquity. It was hard work, and in the afternoon I found myself disinclined for more exercise of a similar sort. I had Lilith out, and took a leisurely ride instead. The next day and the next also I remained at home. The following morning I went again to Moldwarp Hall.

I had not been busy more than an hour or so, when Clara, who, I presume, had in passing heard me at work, looked in.

"Who is a truant now?" she said. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Here has Miss Brotherton been almost curious concerning your absence, and Sir Giles more than once on the point of sending to inquire after you!"

"Why didn't he then?"

"Oh! I suppose he was afraid it might look like an assertion of—of—of baronial rights, or something of the sort. How *could* you behave in such an inconsiderate fashion!"

"You must allow me to have *some* business of my own."

"Certainly. But with so many anxious friends, you ought to have given a hint of your intentions."

"I had none, however."

"Of which? Friends or intentions?"

"Either."

"What! No friends? I verily surprised Miss Pease in the act of studying her 'Cookery for Invalids'—in the hope of finding a patient in you, no doubt. She wanted to come and nurse you, but daredn't propose it."

"It was very kind of her."

"No doubt. But then you see she's ready to commit suicide any day, poor old thing, but for lack of courage!"

"It must be dreary for her!"

"Dreary! I should poison the old dragon."

"Well, perhaps I had better tell you, for Miss Pease's sake, who is evidently the only one that cares a straw about *me* in the matter, that possibly I shall be absent a good many days this week, and perhaps the next too."

"Why then—if I may ask—Mr. Absolute?"

"Because a friend of mine is going to pay me a visit. You remember Charley Osborne, don't you? Of course you do. You remember the ice-cave, I am sure."

"Yes I do—quite well," she answered.

I fancied I saw a shadow cross her face.

"When do you expect him?" she asked, turning away, and picking a book from the floor.

"In a week or so, I think. He tells me his mother and sister are coming here on a visit."

"Yes—so I believe—to-morrow, I think. I wonder if I ought to be going. I don't think I will. I came to please them—at all events not to please myself; but as I find it pleasanter than I expected, I won't go without a hint and a half at least."

"Why should you? There is plenty of room."

"Yes; but don't you see?—so many inferiors in the house at once might be too much for Madame Dignity. She finds one quite enough, I suspect."

"You do not mean that she regards the Osbornes as inferiors?"

"Not a doubt of it. Never mind. I can take care of myself. Have you any work for me to-day?"

"Plenty, if you are in a mood for it."

"I will fetch Miss Brotherton."

"I can do without *her*."

She went, however, and did not return. As I walked home to dinner, she and Miss Brotherton passed me in the carriage on their way, as I learned afterwards, to fetch the Osborne ladies from the rectory, some ten miles off. I did not return to Moldwarp Hall, but helped Styles in the lumber-room, which before night we had almost emptied.

The next morning I was favoured with a little desultory assistance from the two ladies, but saw nothing of the visitors. In the afternoon, and both the following days, I took my servant with me, who got through more work than the two together, and we advanced it so far that I was able to leave the room next the armoury in the hands of the carpenter and the housemaid, with sufficient directions, and did not return that week.

## THE TASMANIAN DEVIL.

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THE obscure hunter who first, in the heat of his admiration, gave the name of devil to the Ursian sarcophilus, probably dreamt little that the title would not only remain to the species, but that a learned naturalist would one day endow the kind with the generic *Diabolus*, adapted unmistakably from Garth's energetic sobriquet.

The original term was indeed more homely still—in fact, too low and trivial to have survived in serious print; and Garth owes it, no doubt, to his immediate and prudent substitution of the more parliamentary term of devil, that he remains the founder of the family name.

Garth was an illiterate farm domestic, employed chiefly as a ranger by his master, Lazarus Hart. His history begins and ends with the one solitary incident connecting his name with the sarcophilus, and he is entirely indebted to the subsequent fame of that distinguished quadruped for being remembered at all in the annals of Tasmania.

Lazarus Hart, on the contrary, was one of the few independent settlers surviving at the granting of the charter. His reputation is founded on a lifelong struggle with adversity, ending in a triumph achieved too late to be enjoyed by himself, but infinitely profitable to his children and successors. It is not the place in these pages to sketch his history as a model colonist, but he has every claim to be noticed as a naturalist of merit, and especially in connection with the life and habits of the devil.

I had never the satisfaction of seeing old Hart himself. He had been for some years dead when, accidentally in London, I made the acquaintance of his son Elias. His son's first words were addressed to me in the form of a rebuke, too well deserved to be not acutely felt, but I had ample solace in the friendship that ensued. We were a large party assembled as guests of a common friend, and all sportsmen of more or less pretensions. We were recounting in turn our adventures, and as I had acquired less fame in a recent campaign than I thought myself entitled to, I am afraid I betrayed ill-humour in my appreciation of the doings of others. I remember I inveighed especially against the modern fashion of extolling the Australian brotherhood, whose exploits I regarded as mild recreations when contrasted with ours in the East. I had no curiosity, I said, to essay my arms beyond the ancient continent. I had encountered in Europe the bear and the wild boar, the jaguar in America, and in



Asia and on the coast of Africa the leopard and the buffalo. I was aware I had still hard labour to perform to earn a name, and from the accounts that reached me Algeria seemed the field of all others for a huntsman resolved at least to deserve renown, although perhaps not destined to secure it. "What business," I added pompously, "had a sportsman who is in earnest, to waste his prime in trapping wombats or in coursing boomers over the easy plains of New South Wales, whilst the lioness leaps, with her cub in her mouth, over the garden gates of Blidah? Why, gentlemen, there isn't an animal in all Australia that, in open ground, would face my old hound Hero!"

"That's all you know about it, master," said Elias Hart, with a smile of assurance that left me no hope of his being wrong. "I can tell you of a creature,—it is true no longer found in Australia properly so called, but still common enough in the remoter backwoods of Van Diemen's Land,—that would not only face your Hero in the open country, but would refuse to move an inch out of his path to let a drove of bullocks pass. Did you never hear of the Tasmanian devil?"

No; I had never heard of the Tasmanian devil. I had imagined, on the contrary, that the zebra-wolf, and the dingo, or native wild dog, were the only carnivorous quadrupeds not positively insignificant on the whole continent and in all the islands of the new world. It was nearly two years later that the first authentic notice appeared in print of the Ursian *sarcophilus*, or *Texas Diabolus* of Gray. I therefore listened with greedy ears to Hart's highly interesting, though somewhat inelegant, narration.

"The devil," he continued, "is a beast of about the size of a large bulldog, in appearance something between a polecat and a bear, but in kind a poucher, like the opossum or the kangaroo. There are devils in nature of many kinds and characters. The wild cat is a devil, the rat is a devil, and so are the fox, the Indian buffalo, the stone marten, and the zebra. But the devil of devils is the devil proper, or, as they called him formerly in the blue report books, the Ursian *sarcophilus*. And it is not only we English that call him devil, his name in French is *diable*, and in German *teufel*, and I am told the Royal Society has given the Latin name of devil to the whole race.

"His natural propensities are those of the gluttonous or sluggish kind, and he will be quiet enough when gorged with flesh and left to undisturbed repose, but the slightest provocation, the merest and most unintentional observation will turn him at once into a veritable fiend. He then becomes instantly the very type of senseless fury, attacking all before him, dead or living, and flying with equal fierceness at a mastiff or a barn-door. Nor is there, whilst life is left to him, either truce or quarter; as long as a shred of flesh remains to tear, or a last bone to shatter, he fights on regardless of the numbers

that surround him, or of his own subsiding strength, until at length his jaws snap faintly, and his life goes gradually out with an infernal snarl.

“ Though taken young, and brought up in captivity, his nature undergoes not the slightest modification. He lives to the last the same surly life, and usually dies in some mad struggle with the bars of his cage. After years of experience he repeats the same acts of profitless and exhausting frenzy. Without apparent motive he rushes at the wall, beating the air like a rabid lunatic, uttering long growls that seem to choke him, till they break out suddenly into a piercing bark. He shows not the smallest attachment to his guardians or feeders, whom he menaces and swears at from the moment they approach him till they pass completely out of sight. When tired out or overfed he becomes stupid and sleepy, rolls himself up into a corner, and falls into a leaden slumber from which it is not always easy to rouse him. Nothing can be cheaper than to feed him. He will be satisfied for days together with huge bones, which he cracks up like biscuit, and usually swallows entirely.

“ The full-grown devil is an animal of strange appearance. His coat is rough, and looks like a blanket brushed the wrong way ; the head and stomach are of a brownish black ; the tail is black also, but with a large patch of white just above the insertion. An apron of white covers the chest, and there are spots of white on the muzzle and the front paws. In the wild state his habits are nocturnal, and he appears as sensitive as an owl to the action of the solar rays. Whilst the sun remains on high, he keeps within the clefts of the rocks, or under the roots of trees, where he sleeps so soundly that the noisiest pack may pass in quest of him without awaking him ; but no sooner do the shades begin to fall, than he issues forth in search of prey, and then, woe to the living thing that passes windward within scent. Beast or bird, large or little, all fall before him in instantaneous helplessness. Once fairly griped, the victim, whatever his kind, is doomed inevitably. A feeble squeak, an unconscious struggle, and all is hushed except the muffled crepitation of bones smashed up and swallowed with the flesh that covers them, the impartial monster making no distinction of morsels.

“ His gait is something similar to that of the brown bear. In walking he plants on the ground the entire sole, which imparts to his movements a kind of solemnity in keeping with his heavy structure. He is, nevertheless, more active than he seems, and hunts with an agility scarcely surpassed by his enemy and neighbour, the Tasmanian wolf. In pursuit of his prey he gives tongue like the jackal, and his peculiar voice, resembling a grunt and a bark emitted simultaneously from the same mouth, betrays him at times to the impatient huntsman who has quitted his fatiguing ambush for the chance of a casual encounter.

"Contrary to what might be expected, the flesh of the *sarcophilus* is succulent and good. It is said to be in taste like veal. It is certain that the esteem it was held in by the original settlers was not the least of the many causes of his total extinction in almost all the inhabited districts of Tasmania.

"The female bears from three to five cubs, which she carries about with her in her pouch until they grow too big to get into it. She loves them tenderly and licks them conscientiously, and no doubt, to save or shield them, she would attack an army, or plunge into a blazing fire. This is a redeeming quality, and the devil is entitled to his due.

"His voracity renders him an easy prey to the trappers. The clumsiest snare suffices, provided it be strong enough to hold him. Any bait attracts him that can be seen or scented—a dead bird, a piece of flesh, a fish, a knot of mussels, or even a lump of lard. He rushes blindly upon all that tempts his appetite, and has been found transfixed upon a greasy spike used in a tanner's yard for stretching skins.

"It is more difficult to secure him by means of dogs. No single dog will attack him twice, and he will fight any number, till he falls completely exhausted. His great strength, his rage and intrepidity, and, above all, his fearful teeth, sometimes against incalculable odds, determine in his favour a mortal strife, in which at first no chance of life seemed possible. The huntsman arriving, finds the quarry gone, and the humbled hounds dispersed or disconcerted.

"The early colonists had much to suffer from the ravages of these animals, which glided stoat-like into their unprotected yards, and destroyed in single nights entire stocks of pigs and poultry. They were consequently forthwith marked for vengeance and extermination. Snares were laid for them in all directions, hunts were organised, and trackers engaged and paid by contribution. It followed that the devils diminished with sensible rapidity, whilst those that remained took gradually refuge in the thickest woods and rockiest caverns, till at length they disappeared completely from their ancient haunts, and were only to be seen or heard of in distant or inaccessible retreats.

"The settlers were at first quite ignorant of the sort of animal they had to deal with, and a story is told of a young Dutch colonist of the name of Breeboorst, who lay in wait one night to take revenge on what he supposed to be an opossum or a dasyure. Armed with a stick, he waited long for the coming of his imagined enemy, and was just about to dismiss the boy that kept him company, when he heard a rustling amongst some dry leaves which he had strewn expressly at the entrance of the hen-roost. He thereupon, with a plank, closed quickly the hole through which he supposed the yard to have been entered, and ran forward to confound the robber face to face. At first he could perceive nothing, but presently

deserted two small eyes intent upon his movements from an adjoining shed. Nothing doubting, he ran forward, and aimed at the marauder's head what he deemed to be a decisive blow. The next moment he found himself on the ground moaning with pain, and remembered no more till he discovered himself in bed, with his father on one side, and on the other a veterinary surgeon, who was the only doctor in the colony. It appeared the blow had been no sooner struck than the devil had rushed on his aggressor, and seizing him fiercely by the lower part of the leg, had thrown him with violence to the ground. At this moment the boy, with great presence of mind, had let loose the dog, which in turn had flown at the devil and diverted his attention from the prostrate youth. The dog was killed in the encounter, and the devil would have returned to his former victim had not the youth's father arrived in time, and paralysed the desperate animal with a gunshot close from the muzzle. The bone of the leg was splintered, and young Breeboorst was long in recovering. He afterwards vowed vengeance on the whole race of devils, and became in time the most determined and foremost of their persecutors. He is still alive, and takes pleasure in relating how the vexation retarded his recovery when he learnt that the infernal brute which had well-nigh bitten his leg off had been allowed to escape with its life. The father had supposed it dead, but the tenacious villain had revived during the flurry of the adventure, and had profited by it to depart unseen."

Hart here resumed the thread of his personal experience, which he had quitted to discourse a moment on the natural history of the singular quadruped he had brought before us. He told us how for years his father and kindred had grappled with famine and fever in lands which he aptly described as refractory to human intrusion, and how at last they had surmounted all obstruction and installed a thriving farm amidst the astonished marshes of Fort Morecomb. Hart's choicest hunting feats were those achieved in pursuit of animals for daily food, but none were to me so attractive as those where the game was the Tasmanian devil. Of these he recounted several, and amongst them was the incident already noticed, where we made the acquaintance of the ranger Garth, whose happy coarseness had extemporised a name, which experience had found appropriate, and science at length adopted. The Ursian sarcophilus had before that time been called at hazard the Tasmanian boar-wolf, the piebald bear, the grizzly badger, and sometimes even the Australian badger, a name since given to the phascolome or wombat, the happiest and least offensive of the whole marsupial family.

Hart's business in England was to fetch from Cornwall, and take back with him to Australia, two orphan nieces, the last of his father's family remaining in Europe. On the eve of his departure, some weeks afterwards, I bade him adieu with something of a longing

heart. I had, nevertheless, no notion at that moment of going in the same direction. It was not till long afterwards, when his words had worn me with their incessant echo, that I began to think seriously of passing into Austral latitudes. Elias was no more a carpet Nimrod than his father. He had been a real and rugged adventurer, and like those of all genuine sportsmen, his accounts were unexaggerated and his good faith sure. I felt, therefore, founded in believing I should find the devil not only a grim and desperate antagonist, but one to which an ambitious huntsman might worthily attach his name, as Paul to the Indian tiger, and Adrian MacCulloch to the shark.

Whilst absorbed one day in these reflections old Hero came into my bedroom. He had been my companion over two-thirds of the globe, and it was fair he should be now consulted on what concerned him, if possible, more intimately than it did myself. "Hero shall decide!" I exclaimed unconsciously aloud, and taking him caressingly by the two ears, I asked him if he felt game to go with me to Australia, and there have a shake with the devil. The dog smiled, and wagged his tail; and I then and there decided at once to go.

I could have started immediately, had I chosen to go in a convict ship, and four months later I could have secured a privileged cabin in a Government packet. I adopted a middle, and as it turned out, a more commodious course, by engaging a berth in an emigrant vessel bound for Sydney, and advertised to sail from Gravesend in the course of the ensuing month. I had written to Hart, and was anxious to be his disciple for a few weeks, in order to save golden time, and in order, if possible, to do the right thing first. He resided in a house built entirely by his children and himself, at an almost unknown place, called Settler's Increment, and situate half-way between Sydney and Inlet Corner. From Inlet Corner I was informed there were merchant ships sailing often for Van Diemen's Land; the destination of Sydney was, therefore, the best that could have offered.

I arrived at Sydney the day before Christmas Day, after the sulkiest voyage I ever remember. The passengers, though three parts paupers, avowed or in reality, were perpetually mysterious and false, telling untrue stories about their past, and giving themselves airs to maintain fictitious actualities. They were, moreover, dirty in their persons, and idle and trifling in their ways, or only serious when gambling. I wished the colony joy of such an ungainly cargo. Hero excepted, and a dog belonging to no one, the captain, and some few of the crew, were the only amiable beings in the ship; but these latter were occupied incessantly, the winds being adverse continually, and the weather occasionally tempestuous. My pleasantest souvenir of the "Julia Boulton" is the captain's astonishment on partaking of a gannet, which I had shot on board, and which I insisted on cooking before him. He declared at first he would never touch it; but the

fumes of the roast seduced him, and, after sending in his plate for a second help, he candidly admitted that gannet was as good as duck. The sole secret is to skin the bird as soon as shot, and then quickly to remove the fat and oil-glands, before the flesh has time to catch the rancid taste of the secretions.

I had business at Sydney, and an introduction to a banker. My business was soon over. It lay with a doubtful debtor, to whom I had years ago lent thirty pounds, and as I had kept the statute running, and had claimed interest under the Act of George, I hoped in part to defray my excursion, and, what was of far more value, to excuse myself to Hart for having gone out of my way by a circuit of two hundred miles. My chance of being paid was the more promising that my friend was said to be amassing money. My first care was, therefore, to look him up, and I was too well served by fortune in my researches to trace him home. My first and only informant was by mere chance an inspector of police, who was able to inform me that my debtor had been in Sydney gaol for the last six months for embezzling wool, and had a year and a half to stay there to complete his time.

My visit to the banker was scarcely more engaging. At first he received me civilly enough, though somewhat condescendingly; but on my happening to use the word "colonial," in reference to his house, he informed me haughtily that well-bred people reserved that word for gum and sugar, and were at the pains to find some less contemptuous term for the establishments of the gentry of the town; and I have since read in a book on Australia that the use of the word "colonial" is expected to be confined by strangers exclusively to the produce of the country, and that visitors from home give great offence by applying it to the inhabitants of the towns.

The few other folks I met with seemed equally determined to keep me in my place. Mortifying hints were whispered at my side at dinner about the rise and fall of empires. Historical comparisons were drawn and commented on, with applications intended evidently for my especial humiliation. In connection with home I could hear of nothing but old-world fallacy, stagnation, selfishness, protection, aristocracy, prejudice, atrophy, and extinction, whilst all out here was freshness, progress, freedom, life, and renovation. One young lady told me that the British oak was doomed to wither, in order to make room for the Australian gum-tree, whose roots were destined to monopolise the soil. Of course this made me feel very small indeed, and I was quite concerned about the British oak; but what could I do to prevent its withering, if the gum-tree wanted so much room? At last I apologised for belonging to the mother-country, and was allowed to depart with a severe admonition.

Refreshing indeed after all this was my reception at the home of Elias Hart. On arriving at Settler's Increment I put up at an inn

which stood invitingly at the entrance to the village. For this Hart reproached me in a tone that touched me to the quick, and he then immediately despatched a man with a mule and cart to fetch my luggage, and at the same time to take a sheep to the innkeeper as a compensation for the loss of his guest.

Hart's interior was a model of unostentatious comfort, and his hospitality of that unobtrusive kind which allows the guest to exist unconsciously ; a contrast to the afflictive zeal of certain hosts, of which the defenceless victim lives in hourly and nervous dread. His family consisted of himself, his wife and sister, nine children, and four labouring domestics. Nearly everything consumed or worn by the family was manufactured on the farm, the corn ground, the wool bleached and spun, and the horseshoes forged and fitted. Hart bade me observe that he had reached the point where specie was the least required, and further that he economised the profits of the miller, the baker, the butcher, and most other intermediates. He admitted, however, that such an Arcadian state would be impossible in denser civilisation, or where land was costly, or required to be tilled expensively.

He was at this time suffering from the effects of an accident, and I joined his family in dissuading him from accompanying me to Van Diemen's Land. I had written him from London, and though I had informed him I should start before I could receive an answer, he had replied on the chance of my delaying, and in his letter he had engaged himself to go with me. It was now, however, arranged otherwise, and he gave me instead a letter to Augustus Hamilton, of Woolnorth, whom he told me I should find a sportsman of the right sort, although bred in London, and a Cockney both in speech and physiognomy. Notwithstanding this assurance, the name of Augustus Hamilton inspired me with involuntary awe, and I shuddered at the recollection of the swells of Sydney ; but I quieted my fear with a mental promise to be vigilant, and especially circumspect in employing the term colonial.

Six weeks later I had passed the straits, and was jolting fast but heavily towards Woolnorth in the postman's car. I found Augustus Hamilton in bed, in a very dirty kitchen, with live fowls on his table pecking at the remains of his supper. He sprang to the ground on seeing me, wiped a chair for me with a stocking, and was soon shaved and ready to receive me becomingly. I gave him Hart's letter, and also a packet of which I had taken charge for him, and which appeared to me, with other things, to contain money. We were very soon sworn friends, and I perceived with satisfaction that Hart's estimate of his friend was correct. I was nevertheless besieged in his presence with a vague, but ever-recurring souvenir. I had certainly seen that face before, but I was quite unable to seize the recollection. At last, in a moment of animation, his features



took an expression which distinctly recalled to me his identity, and I asked him without hesitation whether he had not seen me before. The question seemed to make him uneasy, and he replied in the negative. I then said, "You cannot have forgotten me in Cursitor Street. Is not your real name Nathan Cocksedge?"

Poor fellow! he assented in a tone of chagrin, which made me regret bitterly that I had been so clever. He seemed, however, to be relieved in the end that there were no more secrets between us, and as I tendered him my hand, I assured him that Augustus Hamilton should be to me thenceforth inviolable, and that Nathan Cocksedge was consigned to oblivion. My acquaintance with Hamilton, as he must now be called, arose out of things by no means grateful to my memory. My friends had fondly destined me to become an attorney, and I had gone so far in the profession as to complete my articles with the bygone firm of Brooking and Surr, of Lombard Street. Those were the good old times of the red-tails, the rare old days of the declaration-books and the special originals, when, in a twinkling, for a debt of forty shillings, you could put a struggling tradesman to a cost of as many pounds. Those were the days of arrest on mesne process, of bail in chambers, of bum-bailiffs, nabsters, and men of straw. The calling of a town attorney was then indeed a scald upon the face of London, and richly justified the mordant sarcasms of Pope and Johnson. The country attorney shared in the profits, but was not always privy to the oppressive working.

During my apprenticeship Hamilton was known to me by reputation both as a nabster and a man of straw. A nabster was a sheriff's bull-dog, or sub-aid to an under-sheriff's officer's man. His business was to fly provisionally at the throat of a refractory defendant, and pin him till the arrival of a legal reinforcement. Of course he was responsible for all sorts of consequences, but it was seldom advisable to attack him. A man of straw was a mysterious and taciturn individual, who paced round Clifford's Inn with a single straw sticking accidentally into the side of his shoe. To this individual resorted the unscrupulous suitor who was hard pressed for a witness, a deponent, or a surety, and it was old Brooking himself who convicted Hamilton of some such delinquency, and procured him a year's imprisonment in the city gaol.

On the whole I think I detected in my breast a Pharisaical satisfaction at finding myself the patron and secret-holder of a grateful sinner. In any case I felt no kind of repugnance at accepting his useful and devoted friendship. I felt, moreover, that the change of name and scene, the distance from temptation, the contact with wild beasts and virgin clods, the unsparing sacrifice of his person, and the long privations of the bush, had thoroughly condoned his wickedness, and restored his being to its rightful and natural condition. I was perplexed to know how it came that, with such an unrustic youth, he



had become so hardened and adventurous a ranger. He replied that I had only known him in his ostensible profession. He had subsisted chiefly by poaching in the night at Kingsbury, and that his arm having been there broken in a fight with the keepers, he had been driven to the unholy trade which had ended so unhappily in London. We then moralised awhile on the cutting circles of our small existence, and agreed that our present meeting, so singular in appearance, was, in reality, as natural as the least surprising of our daily occurrences, and we then dismissed the subject, to devote ourselves exclusively to the engrossing business which had brought us together.

A week's preparation enabled us to start for Nobbler's End, where Hamilton informed me we should procure fit men and dogs for the dangerous game we were in quest of. We took with us, in the way of food and cooking utensils, what seemed to me an embarrassing provision; but it turned out to be none too ample for our need. We should, indeed, have been thankful for an extra supply of brandy, of which I imagined we were taking a most suggestive and compromising quantity. At Nobbler's End we had to wait five days for the return of a party of rangers, who were gone for wood to the forest of Little Hampshire. I, for one, however, declared myself well paid for the delay. The men brought back with them, emptied and in good preservation, a brace of bandicoots and a good supply of parrots, poplocks, bister pigeons, and several other kinds of birds. All these I was curious to taste, and found them to be, without exception, excellent. I am convinced there is little, if any, flesh or fish in creation not fit for human food, if scientifically cured and cooked with skill.

At length, through alternate tracts of sand and brushwood, we reached the limit of the Little Hampshire flats, and proceeded up the Spalding Hills, in serious pursuit of the Ursian sarcophilus. Our party consisted of six men, including Hamilton and myself, and seven dogs, including Hero. I felt at times a little nervous about poor old Hero, notwithstanding his spiked collar and his prodigious strength. I knew his courage, and dreaded to see him smart for it undeservedly, from his entire ignorance of his opponent's mode of warfare. I was told the devil, once roused, entirely neglects his own defence, and thinks only of wounding his aggressor. When attacked by a dog, his plan is to seize it by the fore leg, and if he gets fair hold, the bone snaps at once, and the dog limps off disabled. Hero had earned applause in many a sanguinary fight, and I felt truly pained at the thought of witnessing his defeat in his old age, and possibly his death, from the grip of the hideous beast we were expecting to encounter; and I felt the more touchy on the subject, that Hero had become the admiration of the hired rangers, who were provokingly impatient to see him, as they expressed it, "tackle a

devil fasting." Fasting applies to the animal when roused from his sleep in the daytime, a proceeding which redoubles his natural irritability, and which he resents with his utmost ferocity.

I was startled from this unpleasing reverie by the report of a gun some yards ahead of me, and presently Hamilton presented me with a charming little grey quadruped with yellow feet, of about the size of a guinea-pig. It is known classically as the *Antechinus flavipes*, but goes popularly by the name of the yellow-footed pouch mouse. It was a female specimen, and had the pouch sufficiently developed. I skinned it on the spot, and have still the spoils at home. The remains we cooked for supper, and had only to regret that they afforded us so scanty a repast.

The next chance of a shot was mine. I was attracted by a rustling behind me, and, turning quickly, was in time to take aim at an animal of about the size of a rabbit, just as it was about to disappear in the hole of an immense tree. I fired, and the animal fell amongst the lower branches, where it hung lifeless and unreachable. Hamilton climbed the tree like a cat, and threw me my shot, which I was highly impatient to examine. It turned out to be the long-eared pig-foot, so called from the length of its ears, and an extremely faint resemblance of its feet to those of the hog. It was first named the tailless cherop by its discoverer, Michael Edwards, who caught it alive in the hole of a tree, and found it to be without a tail. Other specimens were, however, taken afterwards with tails nearly a foot long, and it became clear that the first individual had merely lost his tail by accident. The name continued nevertheless through the vice of habit, until Gray inscribed the animal with authority under the name of *Castanotos*, from the chestnut colour of its fur. This animal also is a marsupial, as indeed are nine-tenths of the quadrupeds of Australasia. Owen tried to explain the phenomenon as a provision of nature against the effects of drought. "What," he writes, "would become of the helpless young ones whilst the mother was gone, perhaps a two days' journey, in search of water? It is necessary she should take them with her, and for this purpose the pouch is indispensable." But Owen's theory broke down before the instance of the dingo, which is not a marsupial, and which exists and thrives under the very conditions which Owen regards as fatal.

Meanwhile we had been able to discover no trace of the *sarcophilus*, and Hamilton gave orders for returning to our encampment at Nobbler's End, and there packing up for a longer journey westward. A two days' march from the camp brought us to the edge of an immense plain bestrewed with loose stones, over which we had a fatiguing pull of nearly three hours. On the other side, passing westward, we came to an acclivity covered with tall herbage, and interspersed with rocks. Towards evening we reached a sort of rocky platform, from which Hamilton pointed out a spot in the dis-

tance where he had assisted in killing a sarcophilus, and afterwards in roasting and eating it. It was there, he said, we should find the devil if anywhere. The place, he believed, had been undisturbed for years, and he knew there were devils in the neighbourhood.

The whole of that day and the next was spent in beating fruitlessly the covers. We then moved higher, as Hamilton began to suspect the game had been molested recently, and had found by experience that the rocks were safer than the bushes. At nightfall we held a council, and determined to keep watch till moonlight, on the chance of surprising a sarcophilus hunting on scent, at which time, as has been said, the animal betrays its passage by its voice. The dogs were then chained up and the fire extinguished. Towards midnight I fancied I heard the grunt of a pig, and suddenly remembering that the voice of the sarcophilus was said to be something similar, I called softly to Hamilton, and bade him listen. But Hamilton had no need of my warning; he had caught the grunt himself, though farther off, and I heard him fall immediately at full length on the ground. I did the same without knowing why, but I learnt afterwards that Hamilton had taught himself to interrogate the ground like a native bushman. Presently I heard the grunt again, but less distinctly. Hamilton lay still, and so did I, though I began to get tired of a posture which seemed to me a waste of caution, as, whether up or down, it was too dark to be seen by any known organisation of optics. I had since heard, or fancied I heard, the grunt a third time, but still there was no movement. At last I got up, with as little noise as possible, and was about to creep on to Hamilton, when, all at once, guided I suppose by some indication which had escaped my less fine senses, I heard him give a long, low, thin whistle, which quite made my hair stir with excitement. This was a notice well understood by the rangers, for I immediately afterwards heard the chains chink faintly, which apprised me that the dogs were being held in readiness. Hero was close by my side; in fact, he never left me, but he lay as composedly as usual, and appeared not at all to understand my eagerness. We were only three guns, including myself, two of the rangers having merely spears, and the fourth a horse-pistol. The moon rose shortly after, and we were able to converse by signs; but morning dawned and found us still expectant. The game had wisely followed its inspirations, and left us shivering from stillness. The amount of brandy I absorbed that night was positively indecent, but it left no trace of either dryness or nausea, and I believe it saved me from the ague, especially the liberal portion I poured into my boots.

Next day was a total blank, and I began to fear the devils were resolved to balk us. Towards evening, however, my hope revived, and before night I had the envied quarry at my feet. I had strayed a little from my post to follow a strange-looking bird that greatly excited my curiosity, and I owe it to that wilful distraction that I lost

the opening and most interesting scene of the encounter. It was not a long, low whistle that recalled me this time to my obedience, but a series of boisterous halloos, that told me clearly there was an end to ambush, and that the battle was declared in open and unmasked hostility. Shout followed shout in quick succession, and then there came a howl, so long and dismal that old Hero pricked his ears and sprang forward in the direction of the sound. I called him back, determined to have him under my own immediate control, and we hurried on together to the scene of action. As I tore through the brushwood, the horrid stubs gored my feet and sadly impeded my advance. I had scarcely noticed them whilst picking my way leisurely, but now in my haste I found them a most cruel obstruction. I nevertheless got rapidly through, and I shall not forget the scene which broke on my view as I emerged into the open ground. With his back to a large overhanging stone, there stood, half crouched before the dogs, the most horrible-looking beast imaginable. Not that his contour was villainous: in form he resembled a badger, but his physiognomy was literally diabolical, and quite explained and justified his apparently exaggerated name. What struck me first was the look of sarcasm expressed by the drawing down of the corners of the lips,—an expression taken also by the ass, when over-tormented, and unable to intimidate or escape from his tormentors. His jaws were just wide enough apart to reveal his large white teeth without parading them, and from between these issued a continuous growl, that seemed to unwind from a bobbin in his throat. But what most arrested me was the animal's infernal eyes. The eyes of the wild cat are said to be the most savage-looking in nature, but there is about them an expression of uncompromising ferocity, which is frank and unmis-takable. Such might have been the eyes of Marius, which disarmed the affrighted slave commissioned to execute him in his prison. The eyes of the sarcophilus are small, black, leering beads, fraught with design, but close and impenetrable. Such must have been the eyes of Burke, whilst hiding the plaster in his hat, and watching the friendless Italian boy from the dark arches of Great Queen Street.

When I first arrived on the ground, the wounded dog was still howling piteously, with his tail curved under him, and holding up his right fore foot. The five others were close to the devil, dodging within distance, but not venturing to close with him. One, the smallest of the five, appeared the most resolute, fixing him steadily, and apparently watching his opportunity. A shot had been fired, and evidently with some effect, as the devil was bleeding from the ear. One gun was on the ground, bitten short off at the slope of the stock, and the closeness of the dogs prevented the use of the other. On seeing Hero, the men at once hounded him on the devil; and, not hearing my half-muttered counter-orders, looked petrified at his apparent want of courage. At last the small dog closed, and the others took

heart immediately. A fearful strife ensued, in the midst of which I let loose Hero with a shout, meant to explain his previous passiveness, and which he now redeemed abundantly. With one bound he reached the devil, and fastened fiercely and heavily on his throat. This turned the scale at once, for the poor devil was already at bay with the whole pack, and Hero's weight and galling collar completely mastered him. On seeing him thus pinned, a spearsman stepped forward and ended the fight abruptly with a mortal thrust. The devil then turned on his side, still eyeing the dogs defiantly, till his life went out with a snarl that seemed to go right down and expire underground.

The first dog was maimed irreparably, and his master shot him on the spot. Two others were wounded badly, but not incurably, and one had got blinded by some accident not explainable. Hero had not a scratch, and I felt it my duty to make it well understood, for his reputation, that it was I and not he that had fought shy at the beginning.

We flayed the devil then and there, and half salted his carcase. We afterwards lived on it for two days, and were sorry when it came to an end. I cannot say it tastes like veal; it is more like leveret, but lighter in colour, and less close in fibre. The dogs took their share, but without any show of eagerness, and they all of them preferred soaked biscuit. I preserved the jaw-bones and teeth, and still regard them as the most eloquent souvenir I possess.

A few weeks afterwards I was again with Hamilton at Woolnorth, and preparing to take leave of his hospitable kitchen, which he had had well cleaned for my accommodation. He implored me to return after a visit I purposed making to Hobart Town, and he promised me a rare kangaroo hunt in the savannahs of Port Richardson. But my time was now running short, and I was anxious to return to the mainland, to explore the southern districts before winter with Hart and his two sons, as had been agreed, if health permitted. My acquaintance with Hamilton had obliterated Cocksedge, and I felt able to conciliate the two individuals by the simplest application of a rule of charity. His devotedness to me—and he had shown me much during a five days' illness from marsh fever—had been utterly disinterested, for he had in reality nothing to fear from any indiscretion of mine. He consented to my defraying the expenses of our excursion, but refused a ten-pound note which I pressed on his acceptance. I allowed him, at his urgent request, to accompany me to the coast, and he remained my guest at Willan's Bay until the vessel sailed for Inlet Corner. I fancied, as I bade him adieu from the side of the ship, that I discerned in his face a more complicated emotion than usually arises from the mere severance of a temporary tie. Whether that were so or not, I cannot say with certainty; but I am certain of this, that my feeling for him, as his form disappeared in the distance, was wholly purged of its former Pharisaical admixture.

JAMES LEAKEY,

## SIR JOHN HERSCHEL AS A THEORIST IN ASTRONOMY.

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It would be difficult to say in what department of astronomical research Sir John Herschel was most eminent. That he was the greatest astronomer of his day, even those who rivalled or surpassed him in special departments admit without question. He was, indeed, *facile princeps* not merely among the astronomers of his own country, but among all his astronomical contemporaries. He held this position chiefly by reason of the wide range of subjects over which his mastery extended. He was unequalled, or rather unapproached, in his general knowledge of the science of astronomy. It need hardly be said that he was proficient in the mathematical departments of the science (perhaps no one of whom this cannot be said may be regarded as an astronomer at all). In his knowledge of the details of observatory work he was surpassed by few, and his acquaintance with the specialities of astronomical instruments was such as might have been anticipated from the excellence of his mathematical training. He was far the greatest astronomical observer the world has known, with one single exception—Sir W. Herschel. That in certain respects other observers surpassed him may be admitted very readily. He had not the eagle vision of the late Mr. Dawes, for instance; nor had he the aptitude for accurately measuring celestial spaces, angles, and so on, which some of the German astronomers have displayed of late years. But such *minutiæ* as these may well be overlooked when we consider what Sir J. Herschel actually achieved as an observer. Thousands of double stars detected, measured, and watched as they circled round each other; upwards of two thousand nebulae discovered; the southern heavens gauged with a twenty-feet telescope—these, and like achievements, dwarf into insignificance all the observational work accomplished by astronomers since Sir W. Herschel ceased his labours. In one respect, and that noteworthy, Sir John Herschel even surpassed his father. Only one astronomer has yet lived who had surveyed with a powerful telescope the whole sphere of the heavens—that astronomer was the younger Herschel. He went over the whole range of his father's observations, in order (to use his own words) that he might obtain a mastery over his instrument: then in the southern hemisphere he completed the survey of the heavens. He alone, then, of all the astronomers the world has known, could boast that no part of the celestial depths had escaped his scrutiny. I need not dwell on Sir John Herschel's success in

expounding the truths of astronomy. We owe to him, beyond all question, the wide interest at present felt for the science, as well as the special fervour with which the younger astronomers of our day discuss its truths. And, lastly (passing over many departments of astronomical study), Sir John Herschel's position as a theorist in astronomy is unquestionably a most eminent one. My present purpose is to discuss his work in this direction; to endeavour to exhibit the special merits of his mode of theorizing; and if it should happen that to my judgment certain features of Herschel's work in this direction should seem less excellent than the rest, to exhibit the ground on which such judgment is based—truthfully, as is right, but also with fit consideration of the respect (perhaps I should rather say the reverence) due to the memory of the greatest and the most amiable philosopher of our times.

In the first place, let the position of scientific theorizing be rightly apprehended. We hear much of theory and practice, or, in the case of such a science as astronomy, of theory and observation, as if the two were in some sense opposed to each other. Nay, unfortunately, it is not uncommon to hear some observers speak of the astronomical theorist as if he held a position quite apart from theirs. Theorists do not, on the other hand, adopt a corresponding tone in speaking of observers. And this for a very simple reason—the theorist must needs value the labours of the observer, because it is on such labours that he must base his theories. But observers—at least such observers as do not themselves care to theorize—are apt to condemn the theorist, to suppose that the hypotheses he deals with have been evolved from the depths of his moral consciousness, instead of being based on those very observations which they mistakenly imagine that the theorist undervalues. The fact, indeed, is really this—that the theorist alone values observation as fully as it deserves. The observer is too apt to value observations for their own sake; the theorist sees in them a value beyond that which they possess in themselves—a value depending on their relation to other observations, as well as a value depending on the application of suitable processes of manipulation, or, as it were, of manufacture. It is not going too far, indeed, to say that observations as originally made are as raw material—highly valuable it may well be (and the manufacturer will be better aware of this than the producer of the raw material), but owing their value to their capacity for being wrought into such and such fabrics. It would be as reasonable for the miner to despise the smith and the engineer, as for the observer in science to condemn him who interprets observations and educes their true value.

Let me quote here a passage from those too little studied essays, the papers contributed by Sir W. Herschel to the Transactions of the Royal Society. The passage is interesting as belonging to the opening of that noble essay in which he first presented to the world



his ideas respecting the constitution of the celestial depths. "First let me mention," he says, "that if we would hope to make any progress in investigations of a delicate nature, we ought to avoid two opposite extremes, of which I can hardly say which is the most dangerous. If we indulge a fanciful imagination and build worlds of our own, we must not wonder at our going wide from the path of truth and nature; but these will vanish like the Cartesian vortices, that soon gave way when better theories were offered. On the other hand, if we add observation to observation, without attempting to draw not only certain conclusions but also conjectural views from them, we offend against the very end for which only observations ought to be made." "I will endeavour," he adds, speaking of the special work he was then engaged upon, "to keep a proper medium; but if I should deviate from that, I could wish not to fall into the latter error."

The power of forming sound theories depends on many mental qualities and habitudes—some positive, some negative. I propose to consider the chief of these, in about the order in which they are called into exercise in the gradual progression whereby a theory advances to its final stage, illustrating each by the work of the great astronomer whose position as a theorist is my present theme.

Sir John Herschel has himself described in clear and powerful language the quality which is primarily requisite in the theorist. "As a first preparation, he must loosen his hold on all crude and hastily-adopted notions, and must strengthen himself by something like an effort and a resolve for the unprejudiced admission of any conclusion which shall appear to be supported by careful observation and logical argument, even should it prove of a nature adverse to notions he may have previously formed for himself, or taken up, without examination, on the credit of others. Such an effort is, in fact, a commencement of that intellectual discipline which forms one of the most important ends of all science. It is the first movement of approach towards that state of mental purity which alone can fit us for a full and steady perception of moral beauty as well as physical adaptation. It is the 'euphrasy and rue' with which we must 'purge our sight' before we can receive and contemplate as they are the lineaments of truth and nature."

These just principles have been perhaps as clearly laid down by other men of science; but it may be questioned whether any has ever more thoroughly obeyed them than Sir John Herschel. The enforced mental purity with which he approached a subject on which he proposed to theorize was indeed so remarkable that to many it was scarce even intelligible. His determination to remove from his own mind all the effects of preconceived opinions, whether adopted independently or received at the hands of others, was mistaken by some for an undue humility of mind. Nay, one biographer went so far as



to ascribe to a spirit of flattery (and that spirit the offspring of vanity!\*) that characteristic which, rightly understood, marked Sir John Herschel's mind as subservient to truth alone.

The completest proof which a man of science can give of this "mental purity" is afforded by a readiness to submit to some crucial

\* The obituary notice in which this remark appeared was obviously written by a very able man, and one who held in very high respect the abilities of Sir John Herschel; and, notwithstanding the feeling of pain with which I conceive every admirer of Sir John Herschel must have read the passage, I imagine that no one was disposed to question the writer's honesty of purpose. Professor Tyndall, in a feelingly-written letter, challenged the writer of the passage to make known his name and to defend his opinion. From internal evidence in the obituary notice itself, I am disposed to believe that, apart from the reasons assigned by the editor for the non-acceptance of this challenge, there was one very excellent reason why the writer could not respond to a challenge which would have been to him as the trumpet to the war-horse not very long ago. Unless I am deceived, the author of the biography did not live to see it in print.

It would be idle to defend Sir John Herschel from the charge of vanity—a charge which could only have had birth in a total misapprehension of the singular sweetness of disposition which endeared the great astronomer not only to all who knew him personally, but to many (the present writer among the number) who, without being personally acquainted with him, received from him written words of encouragement and kindness. Yet it may be permitted me to point out (earnestly disdaining, the whilst, all notion that the argument is needed in Sir John Herschel's defence) the utter fallacy of the reasoning by which the charge of vanity was supported. It is perfectly true that flattery is always the offspring of vanity or of a worse failing; and if compliments addressed to others on the score of their views or theories be admitted to be untrue, the charge of flattery is established, and with it the charge of vanity of disposition. But when such compliments relate to opinions opposed to those held by the person who pays them (and it was the very basis and main argument of the attack on Sir John Herschel that this was the case), the argument against vanity is at once seen to be altogether stronger than the argument in its favour founded on the suspicion of flattery. For a vain man may well be supposed to flatter others in matters not affecting his own vanity, in order that he in turn may be flattered in those matters respecting which he is vain. But the spirit of detraction itself could not force any man to believe that a vain person would, for the sake of praise, over-praise another to his own dispraise. A systematic readiness to give to others their due, even though at his own cost, must surely be explained as arising from a genuine desire to do justice. Such a desire may be, unfortunately, far less common than could be wished; but is the unusual nature of a form of excellence a valid reason for preferring some utterly incongruous evil motive in explanation of conduct obviously suggesting such exceptional excellence of disposition?

No one who had occasion to seek the opinion or advice of Sir John Herschel could fail to be struck by his exceeding courtesy, and by the readiness with which he admitted or noted errors into which he might have fallen (as all men will). And yet I think that those who possess letters written by him, and will carefully examine them, will find, for each error admitted by him, at least two pointed out in their own views. Indeed, any one who objected to be set right when in error, might well be disposed to regard Sir John Herschel as a merciless correspondent, notwithstanding the calm courtesy of his remarks. He set truth first of all things; and by comparison with her, neither his own opinions nor those of others were permitted to have any weight whatever.

test a theory which he has strong reasons for desiring to see established. I draw a distinction here between testing a theory and the search for evidence respecting a theory. One who is not free from prejudice may yet none the less eagerly search for evidence respecting the theories he desires to advocate. But to test a theory crucially, to enter on a series of researches which must needs reveal the weak points of a theory, this is what only the true man of science is capable of. "This," as Professor Tyndall well remarks, "is the normal action of the scientific mind. If it were otherwise—if scientific men were not accustomed to demand verification—if they were satisfied with the imperfect while the perfect is attainable, their science, instead of being, as it is, a fortress of adamant, would be a house of clay, ill fitted to bear the buffetings of the storms to which it has been from time to time, and is at present, exposed."

Now, when Sir John Herschel commenced his labours as an astronomer, there were two theories before the world, respecting which it may fairly be asserted that had he regarded them with a feeling amounting to strong prejudice in their favour, he might have claimed forgiveness. They were of unequal importance, but each was full of interest.

The first related to those double stars which now form so favourite a subject of study with the amateur astronomer. His father, commencing the investigation of these objects under the impression that the two stars which seemed to form each pair were but accidentally seen nearly in the same direction, had been led after long labours to the conclusion that the double stars are for the most part real star-couples, physically associated by the mighty bond of their common gravity. A strange theory in those days, though now so commonly admitted—a theory not yet established by the evidence which had been adduced in its favour at the time when Sir John Herschel's career as an observer commenced. The theory admitted of a ready test at that time, however, for Sir William Herschel had recorded more than thirty years before the aspect of many hundreds of these objects, and it required only that all the double stars thus pictured by the elder Herschel should be submitted to a new and searching scrutiny, in order to set at rest at once and for ever the question whether they were physically associated. If they were, some among them must needs be circling round each other at a rate rendering their motions recognisable. It needed only that these should be selected from the rest by a comparison with Sir William Herschel's researches, and then watched as they moved around their common centre, in order to prove that double-sun systems, wonderful as the idea might seem, have yet a real existence. On the other hand, the test was a crucial one. If no such signs of motion as the elder Herschel had suspected were found in reality to exist, it would be proved that that great astronomer had been mistaken in the theory itself, which had seemed so full of interest.

The younger Herschel, entering into alliance with James South, submitted his father's theory respecting the double stars to this most thorough test—with a result which is known to all students of astronomy. Plain proof was obtained that many double stars are physically associated, and thus the strange theory of coupled suns was placed on a firm basis.

The second theory above referred to was far more important. Sir William Herschel's long survey of the northern skies had led him to form and to enunciate those grand views respecting the constitution of the heavens with which his name will for ever remain associated. I do not propose here to discuss the principles of research adopted by Sir William Herschel, either in his star-gauging or in the survey of the celestial cloudlets which astronomers call *nebulae*. Nor shall I here inquire into the reasoning by which he was led to those noble generalisations which constituted his theory respecting the construction of the universe. What I principally desire to do in this place is to show with what readiness Sir John Herschel subjected theories which he undoubtedly held in the highest respect to the most severe test to which they could by any possibility be exposed.

Of the reverence with which the younger Herschel regarded the noble labours and the grand conceptions of his father it is perhaps needless to speak. He has, indeed, been blamed, by those who misunderstood his disposition, for carrying that reverence to excess, insomuch that one writer has not scrupled to speak of the manner in which Sir John Herschel regarded the instruments his father had employed as approaching in its nature to idolatry.\* Altogether

\* In the biographical notice to which I have referred above, the statement is made that Sir John Herschel had "so specially sanctified his idol" (his father's forty-feet reflector) "that he could not cheerfully bear to hear it lightly spoken of;" and elsewhere in the same notice, that in speaking of this instrument he "altogether left an impression that a little less sensibility and a little more sense would have saved a good deal of mortification." "These be very bitter words;" and if it chanced that they were true, we might yet regard their utterance as in exceedingly bad taste—first, because they are personal, and secondly, because they bear no relation to those parts of Sir John Herschel's life which may be regarded as of public interest. But I venture to express the conviction that those who will carefully study Sir John Herschel's remarks respecting his father's largest telescope will not adopt his biographer's interpretation of those remarks. I have further the means of showing that Sir John Herschel's views respecting this instrument were not such as have been here ascribed to him. I may be permitted to quote from a letter addressed to myself upon the subject, partly because of Sir John Herschel's repeatedly-expressed willingness to permit remarks in his letters to be quoted, and partly because the publication of his own words in this special instance may serve to remove a false and unjust impression respecting his disposition. As it chanced that the opinion expressed in the passage I am about to quote is directly opposed to one I had myself publicly expressed, I find a further reason for desiring to make the passage known. I had asked him whether he thought (as I mentioned that I did) that his father had really discovered four additional satellites of the planet Uranus. "As to these four

denying the justice of such views as these, we must yet recognise the fact that if any theories could have so far found favour in Herschel's sight as to cause him to forget the rules which he had laid down for his own guidance, and to seek rather for evidence confirming those theories than for experiments by which their value might be tested, it would have been to his father's theories respecting the constitution of the universe that he would have been disposed to extend this indulgence.

Yet the noblest series of observations made by the younger Herschel were so devised as to afford a crucial test of the accuracy of his father's views respecting the constitution of the heavens. The elder Herschel had shown that certain relations prevailed among the celestial objects visible at his northern observatory, and it was on the existence of those relations that his theories were founded. It is clear, however, that the mere accident that the observation of the celestial sphere had been first prosecuted in northern latitudes ought not to affect the views which men should form respecting the heavens. The terms North and South have relation to this little earth on which we live, *not* (properly speaking) to the celestial sphere, though they have become in a sense associated with that sphere. We speak of the North Pole of the heavens and of the South Pole of the heavens, and again of the revolution of the celestial sphere, because the rotation of our own earth seems to give a reality to these expressions. But in judging of the constitution of the heavens we are bound to lay aside this usage, or at least to remember that it bears no real relation to the system of stars. We are placed in the midst of this vast system as a traveller in the midst of some vast forest, and the configuration of the system is no more associated in reality with the position in which our earth's axis chances to be situated, than the shape of a forest is associated with the direction in which the traveller pleases to pursue his course.

Sir William Herschel, then, had studied the northern heavens much as a traveller might study the aspect of those parts of a forest towards which his course was leading him. The southern heavens, or those parts of them which are never seen in our latitudes, were quite as well able to supply information respecting the constitution of the sidereal system as those which Sir William Herschel had surveyed. And it is clear that if the elder Herschel had rightly interpreted the northern skies, the southern skies should teach precisely the same

satellites," ran his reply (which lies before me as I write), "I incline to the opinion that my father must have too readily persuaded himself that the minute points of light which from time to time *he undoubtedly saw*, were *all really* satellites. The testimony of Lord Rosse's and Mr. Lassell's reflectors—which are composed of metal much more reflective than even that of the eighteen-inch, and *very* much more than that of the four-feet reflector of my father—I think must be held conclusive." (The italics are his.)

lesson; whereas, if in his speculations concerning the northern heavens he had mistaken accidental peculiarities for essential features of the celestial spaces themselves, then the study of the southern heavens could scarcely fail to reveal his mistake and (probably) to explain its source.

To this arduous task—a task which, even if its result were favourable, would add little to the admiration with which his father's work was contemplated by all who understood its purport; while, if unfavourable, it would serve to negative all his father's hypotheses—Sir John Herschel devoted twenty-one years of his life. Eight years he passed in preparation, that preparation consisting in the complete re-survey of the northern skies; four years at the Cape of Good Hope, in the survey of the southern heavens; and lastly, nine years in reducing his observations to form and presenting them in his own effective manner, in one of the most masterly scientific treatises the world has yet seen. In the presence of such noble labours, conducted in a spirit so philosophic, the fact that the theories of the elder Herschel were in all their more important features most amply confirmed, seems to sink almost into insignificance. We feel that, loving as was the reverence with which Sir John Herschel contemplated his father's work, he had set scientific truth far above that reverence. He had entered cheerfully on labours which might have resulted in shaking men's faith in his father's opinions; and no question can exist that, had this been the result, it would have been as fully exhibited to the world as that which actually rewarded Sir John Herschel's labours.

The next quality which is called into action in the formation of theories is the power of seeing the full meaning of observed facts—of seeing beneath the surface, so to speak—since observed facts often, on the face of them, show little which tends to enlighten the inquirer. In order to explain my meaning, I will take two instances from the history of observations made upon the planet Saturn. When Galileo first turned his telescope upon this planet he imagined that he could see on either side of a central disc two other discs, each nearly half as large as the central one. He watched the planet on several nights, seeing always this appearance. But when at a later season he viewed the planet, the two side discs had vanished. They reappeared again after a time; and, as he continued to watch the planet, he saw them change somewhat in size and shape, but they always remained at an unchanged distance from the central disc. Now it can be demonstrated that, by means of abstract reasoning alone, quite independently of that increase of optical power which subsequently enabled Huyghens to interpret these appearances, Galileo might have convinced himself that Saturn is girdled about by a flat ring inclined to the path in which the planet travels. Here was an instance, then, where an observed fact implied in reality much more than it seemed to do at

first sight. The other instance is of like nature. The observer Bond (the elder), of America, noticed on the brightest and widest of the rings of Saturn two shaded regions, symmetrically placed, close by the inner boundary of this ring, and at the two ends of the oval into which this inner outline is foreshortened. The observation in itself seems to be rather perplexing than instructive; but it is the perplexing observations which, in the long-run, best repay careful study, for they can usually be only explained in one way. I have been able to show that this particular observation (if admitted) proves beyond all possibility of question that where these shaded regions appear we see, *through the ring*, the dark sky beyond.\*

I know of no more remarkable instance of Sir John Herschel's readiness and skill in interpreting observed facts than the way in which he dealt with the features he had recognised in the Magellanic Clouds. He was the first to survey those strange celestial regions with a powerful telescope. He mapped down and pictured multitudes of star-cloudlets, scattered among the myriads of minute stars which produce the milky light of the Magellanic Clouds. At this point others might have ceased their labours. *There* was an array of interesting objects contained in certain regions of the heavens—what more could be said? But Sir John Herschel was not thus satisfied. He reasoned from the shape of the Magellanic Clouds to the distances of the star-cloudlets within them, and thence to the scale on which these star-cloudlets are formed. He was able to deduce in this way perhaps the most important conclusion to which astronomers have ever been led by abstract reasonings—a conclusion interpreted by Whewell, Herbert Spencer, and in my own inquiries into the star-depths, to mean nothing short of this: that, so far as the only available evidence we have is concerned, all orders of star-cloudlets belong to our own star system, and not to external galaxies.

For another instance of Sir John Herschel's power in this respect, I would refer the reader to his discussion of the phenomena presented by Halley's comet during its approach towards and recession from the sun in the years 1835-1836. A brief *résumé* of this discussion will be found in the charming volume entitled "*Familiar Essays on Scientific Subjects*;" but the student of astronomy should also read the original paper in the "*Results of Astronomical Observations made at the Cape of Good Hope*." Here I shall merely quote the conclusion of the reasoning, as summarized in the "*Familiar Essays*," in order to show how much which was certainly not directly contained in the observations was deduced in this instance by abstract reasoning. It was

\* "*Saturn and its System*," pp. 118-121. The reasoning in these pages is not hypothetical, but demonstrative, though of course the demonstration fails if the observed relation should be shown to have no real existence. There are other reasons for believing that we can see through the Saturnian rings, and that these are formed of disconnected satellites; but the evidence given by these shaded regions is singularly simple and effective.

"made clear" that the tail of this comet "was neither more nor less than an accumulation of luminous vapour, darted off, in the first instance, towards the sun, as if it were something raised up, and as it were exploded, by the sun's heat, out of the kernel, and then immediately and forcibly turned back and repelled from the sun."

Another faculty which the theorist should possess in a high degree is a certain liveliness of imagination, whereby analogies may be traced between the relations of the subject on which he is theorizing and those of objects not obviously associated with that subject. This faculty Sir John Herschel possessed in a very high degree—almost as strikingly as his father, who in this respect probably surpassed all other astronomers, unless we place Kepler and Newton on the same level. It is obvious that the faculty is of extreme importance, though it is one which requires a judicious control, since if it be too readily indulged it may at times lead us astray.

One of the finest illustrations of Sir John Herschel's aptitude in tracing such analogies is to be found in his reasoning respecting the zones in which the solar spots ordinarily make their appearance. I give this reasoning as it was originally presented in the fine work to which I have already so often referred, the "Results of Observations made at the Cape of Good Hope." "Whatever be the physical cause of the spots," says Herschel, "one thing is certain, that they have an intimate connection with the rotation of the sun upon its axis. The absence of spots in the polar regions of the sun, and their confinement to two zones extending to about latitude 35 degrees on either side, with an equatorial zone much more rarely visited by spots, is a fact which at once refers their cause to fluid circulations, modified, if not produced, by that rotation, by reasoning of the very same kind whereby we connect our own system of trade and anti-trade winds with the earth's rotation. Having given any exciting cause for the circulation of atmospheric fluids from the poles to the equator and back again, or *vice versa*, the effect of rotation will necessarily be to modify those currents as our trade winds and monsoons are modified, and to dispose all those \* meteorological phenomena on a great scale, which accompany them as their visible manifestations, in zones parallel to the equator, with a calm equatorial zone interposed." Herschel then proceeds to inquire "what cause of circulation can be found in the economy of the sun, so far as we know and can understand it." With this inquiry, however, we are not at present concerned, save only to note how the aptitude of the theorist in the recognition of analogies leads him to inquiries which otherwise he would not have entered upon.

Sir John Herschel, indeed, entertained a singularly strong belief in the existence of analogies throughout the whole range of created

\* In the text the word is *their*. I think the word must have been written *those*.



matter. As an evidence of this I venture to quote a passage from a letter of great interest, which I received from him in August, 1869. It relates to the constitution of the heavens, referring especially to a remark of mine to the effect that all forms of star-cloud and star-cluster seem to be included within the limits of our own sidereal system. "An opinion," he wrote, "which the structure of the Magellanic Clouds has often suggested to me, has been strongly recalled by what you say of the inclusion of every variety of nebulous or clustering form within the galaxy—viz., that if such be the case, that is, if these forms belong to and form part and parcel of the galactic system, then that system includes within itself miniatures of itself on an almost infinitely reduced scale; and what evidence then have we that there exists a universe beyond?—unless a sort of argument from analogy that the galaxy, with all its contents, may be but one of these miniatures of that vast universe, and so on *ad infinitum*; and that in that universe there may exist multitudes of other systems on a scale as vast as our galaxy, the analogues of those other nebulous and clustering forms which are not miniatures of our galaxy."

This, perhaps, is the grandest picture of the universe that has ever been conceived by man.

Next in order comes that faculty by which the chain of causes and effects (or of what we call such) is traced out, until the true correlation of all the facts dealt with by the theorist is clearly recognised. Adequately to illustrate the action of this faculty, however, would obviously require more space than is available in such a paper as the present. I shall mention but one instance of Sir John Herschel's skill in this respect, selecting for the purpose a passage (in the first edition—1833—of his treatise on astronomy), the opinions expressed in which have been erroneously supposed to have been in the first instance enunciated by the celebrated engineer, George Stephenson. Tracing out the connection between the action of the central luminary of our system and terrestrial phenomena, Sir John Herschel remarks that "the sun's rays are the ultimate source of almost every motion which takes place on the surface of the earth. By its heat are produced all winds, and those disturbances in the electric equilibrium of the atmosphere which give rise to the phenomena of lightning, and probably also to those of terrestrial magnetism and the aurora. By their vivifying action vegetables are enabled to draw support from inorganic matter, and become in their turn the support of animals and of man, and the sources of those great deposits of dynamical efficiency which are laid up for human use in our coal strata. By them the waters of the sea are made to circulate in vapour through the air, and irrigate the land, producing springs and rivers. By them are produced all disturbances of the chemical equilibrium of the elements of nature, which by a series of compositions and decompositions give rise to new products and originate a transfer of materials.



Even the slow degradation of the solid constituents of the surface, in which its chief geological changes consist, is almost entirely due, on the one hand, to the abrasion of wind and rain and the alternation of heat and frost, and, on the other, to the continual beating of the sea-waves, agitated by winds, the results of solar radiation." He goes on to show how even "the power of subterranean fires," repressed or relieved by causes depending on the sun's action, "may break forth in points where the resistance is barely adequate to their retention, and thus bring the phenomena of even volcanic activity under the general law of solar influence."

As respects Sir John Herschel's skill in devising methods for throwing new light on questions of interest, it is only necessary to remark that we owe to him the first experimental determination of the quantity of heat received from the sun, as well as a solution of difficulties which seemed to Sir William Herschel almost insuperable in the problem of estimating the relative brightness of the lucid stars. I may add also that he was among the first, if not actually the first, to suggest that the prismatic analysis of solar light might "lead us to a clearer insight into its origin."

Nor is it necessary to dwell specially on that most notable quality of Sir John Herschel's character as a theorizer—the light grasp with which he held those theories which he had himself propounded. This characteristic is so intimately associated with the mental purity the necessity of which Sir John Herschel kept so constantly in his mind, as I have shown above, that having exhibited instances of the last-named quality, it is hardly necessary to point to cases by which the other has been illustrated. Suffice it to say that no theorist of modern times has surpassed Herschel, and few have equalled him, in that complete mastery of self whereby it becomes possible for the student of science not merely to admit that he has enunciated erroneous opinions, but to take in hand the theories of others, and to work as patiently and skilfully in placing such theories on a firm basis as though they had been advocated in the first place by himself. I know no more perfect proof of strength than this lightness of hold, especially in the case of theories which may for many years have been among the favourite views of the theorizer. To those who have never theorized, it may seem the easiest thing in the world to abandon a long-favoured theory. How difficult it really is, however, is shown by the persistence with which even eminent students of science have struggled to maintain their theories long after the most convincing evidence has been obtained against them. Unfortunately for science, the lightness of grasp with which the Herschels, father and son, held their most favoured theories is even more uncommon than the observing skill, the untiring patience, and the ingenuity of device with which they sought for evidence to establish the truths of astronomy.

One quality alone Sir John Herschel seems to me (I venture the opinion with extreme diffidence) to have possessed in a less eminent degree than those other qualities which are necessary for successful theorizing. Lightness of grasp for theories needs to be accompanied by a most rigid grasp for facts. I conceive that in some instances Sir John Herschel held facts almost as lightly as he held theories. Let me not be misunderstood. I would by no means desire to imply that Sir John Herschel in any instance wittingly overlooked known facts. To suppose, indeed, that this was my meaning would be to suppose that at the close of this paper I desired to present Sir John Herschel to the reader in quite a different light than in the earlier paragraphs. I would merely note that in some instances Sir John Herschel seemed to forget that certain facts had already been established—even sometimes that he had himself established such and such facts. It is, of course, always possible that where I thus suppose him to have been forgetful of facts which he had either already admitted or established, I have in reality misunderstood either his opinion of the facts or those statements of his which seem to me at variance with such facts. And yet—to take an instance which is more particularly in my thoughts at this moment—I have not been alone in interpreting Sir John Herschel's own remarks about the Magellanic Clouds to imply that, in the only instance in which any determination of the distances of the several orders of nebulae has been possible, nebulae of *all* orders have been found to lie far within the limits of distance to which our own star system extends. As I have already mentioned, Dr. Whewell and Mr. Herbert Spencer took precisely the same view of Sir John Herschel's reasoning as I have done; and, indeed, for my own part, I can conceive no other interpretation, either of his reasoning, or of the facts on which his reasoning was based. Yet I think that I am not mistaken in believing that much which has since been written by Sir John Herschel about the nebulae is wholly at variance with the "demonstrated fact" of that remarkable sentence which I have quoted above. This, at any rate, is certain, that the views which Dr. Whewell, Mr. Herbert Spencer, and I myself have expressed about the nebulae (views identical so far as they overlap) have been commonly regarded as differing from the opinions entertained by Sir John Herschel respecting nebulae long after he had enunciated the "demonstrated fact" referred to above.\*

Other instances might be cited which seem almost as decisive of the fact that in this special respect Sir John Herschel was not equal to his father, the solidity of whose reasoning was never in a single

\* That Sir John Herschel never withdrew the opinion that that fact is demonstrated by the evidence, I happen to know quite certainly; because, commenting on a remark in my "Other Worlds," which seemed to imply that he had changed his mind, he noted in a letter to myself that he still retained the opinion expressed in the quoted passage.

instance marred by a forgotten fact. It may, indeed, be regarded as in no sense wonderful if one whose labours extended over so enormous—one may even say, without forgetting his father's work, so unparalleled—a range as Sir John Herschel's, forgot sometimes those facts which he had already admitted on the evidence obtained by others, or even those which he had himself established.\*

But even if this blemish have a real existence, it is but as a spot upon the sun. It bears no further than *this* upon our opinion of Sir John Herschel's position as a theorist in astronomy: that whereas but for this occasional forgetfulness he might have ranked higher than Sir William Herschel himself, we must now concede that the younger Herschel was second to the elder, but to the elder Herschel alone. A remarkable era in astronomy, observational and theoretical, has come to a close with the death of Sir John Herschel—an era lasting nearly a full century, during which two astronomers, father and son, have stood forth more prominently than any save the very greatest names in astronomical history. With all our faith in the progress of the human race (and my own faith in that progress is very strong), we can yet scarcely hope that for many generations astronomy will look upon their like again.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

\* That this did, at any rate, sometimes happen, cannot be denied even by Sir John Herschel's warmest admirers, since in the prefaces to his "Outlines of Astronomy" we find him noting that theories which he had spoken of as "certain curious views of M. Jean Reynaud" had been "reasoned out" by himself "to identical conclusions" many years before, a fact which had "completely escaped his recollection when perusing the works of M. Reynaud."

## HANNAH.

A. Rebel.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

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### CHAPTER VIII.

HANNAH's first feeling on discovering her brother-in-law's absence was intense relief. Then, as she sat over the solitary breakfast-table, there came unto her an uneasiness akin to fear. He had done exactly what she had not done; what, in spite of her first instinctive wish, she had decided was unwise and cowardly to do—he had run away.

From what? From the scandal? But since it was all false, and they innocent, what did it matter? Could they not live it down? Dreadful as things had appeared in the long watches of the night, in that clear light of morning, and with the touch of her darling's arms still lingering about her neck, Hannah felt that she could live it down. Perhaps he could not, perhaps he was afraid—and a cold shiver crept over her—a conviction that he was afraid.

In the sick friend she did not quite believe. She knew all Bernard's affairs—knew that though he had an old college companion ill in London, it was no friend close enough to take him suddenly and compulsorily from all his duties—he who so hated going from home. Yes, he must have gone on her account, and in consequence of what happened last night. Her first impulse of relief and gratitude sank into another sort of feeling. He had certainly run away, leaving her to fight the battle alone. That is, if he meant them to fight it out. If not, if he wished her to leave him, in his absence he would perhaps take the opportunity of telling her so.

For not yet—not even yet—did that other solution of the difficulty suggest itself to Hannah's mind. Had she looked at the sweet, grave face reflected in the mirror opposite, had she heard the patient, tender voice which answered Rosie's infantile exactions—for she had gone and fetched the child, as usual, after breakfast—the truth would at once have occurred to her—concerning any other woman. But it did not concern herself; or only in that form—a rather sad, but perfectly safe one—not that her brother-in-law was growing fond of her, but that she was growing fond of him; fond enough to make his marriage, or any other catastrophe which should part them, not so indifferent to her as it once had been.

But still this was only affection. Hannah had never had a brother, her nearest approach to the tie having been her cousin Arthur, who from his extreme gentleness and delicacy of health was less like a brother than a sister—ay, even after he changed into a lover. Now, when not one spark of passion, only sacred tenderness, was mixed up with the thought of him, his memory was less that of a man than an angel. In truth, only since she had lived with Mr. Rivers had Hannah found out what it was to associate with a real man, at once strong and tender, who put a woman in her right place by conscientiously taking his own with regard to her, and being to her at once a shelter and a shield.

Poor Hannah! she had grown so accustomed now to be taken care of, that she felt if fate thrust her out into the bitter world again, she should be as helpless as one of those little fledglings about whom, in the intervals of her meditations, she was telling Rosie a pathetic story. And when Rosie said, "Poor 'ittle dicky-birds!" and looked quite sad, then, seeing Aunt Hannah look sad too—alas! not about "dicky-birds"—burst into the sympathetic sobbing of her innocent age, Aunt Hannah's heart felt like to break.

It would have broken many a time that day, but for the blessed necessity of keeping a bright face before the child. Ay, even though sometimes there occurred to her, with a refined self-torture, the thought of what she should do if Mr. Rivers sent her away without Rosie. But she did not seriously fear this—he could not be capable of such cruelty. If he were—why, Aunt Hannah was quite capable of—something else which he might not exactly like, and which perhaps the unpleasant English law might call child-stealing. And she remembered a story, a true story, of an aunt who had once travelled from England to America, and there fairly kidnapped from some wicked relations her dead sister's child; pretended to take it out for a walk, and fled over snow and through forests, travelling by night and hiding by day, till she caught the New York steamer, and sailed, safe and triumphant, for English shores.

"As I would sail, for Australia or America, any day, if he drives me to it. Oh, Rosie! you little know what a desperate woman Tannie could be made!"

And Rosie laughed in her face, and stroked it, and said, "Good Tannie, pretty Tannie!" till the demon sank down, and the pure angel that always seems to look out of baby-eyes comforted Hannah in spite of herself. No one can be altogether wretched, for long together, who has the charge of a healthy, happy, loving little child.

Sunday came, but Mr. Rivers did not return; sending as substitute in his pulpit an old college chum, who reported that he had left London for Cambridge, and was staying there in his old college; at which Lady Rivers expressed herself much pleased.

"He shuts himself up far too much at home, which would be

natural enough if he had a wife ; but for a man in Bernard's circumstances is perfectly ridiculous. I hope he will now see his mistake, and correct it."

Hannah answered nothing. She knew she was being talked at, as was the habit of the Moat House. Her only protection was not to seem to hear. She had, as he desired, taken Bernard's message to his family, even showing the letter, and another letter she got from him respecting Mr. Hewlett the clergyman, also evidently meant to be shown. Indeed, he wrote almost daily to her about some parish business or other, for Hannah had become to him like her lost sister—his "curate in petticoats." But every letter was the briefest, most matter-of-fact possible, beginning "My dear sister," and ending "your affectionate brother." Did he do this intentionally, or make the epistles public intentionally? She rather thought so. A wise, kind precaution ; and yet there is something painful and aggravating in any friendship which requires precautions.

Day after day Hannah delivered her brother-in-law's messages and transacted his business, speaking and looking as calmly as if she were his mere *locum tenens*, his faithful "curate," as if her throat were not choking and her hands trembling, with that horrible lie of Dixon's ever present to her mind. She tried to find out whether it had ever reached others' minds, whether there was any difference in the way people glanced at her or addressed her ; but beyond a certain carelessness, with which she was usually treated at the Moat House when Mr. Rivers was not present, and a slight coldness in other houses, which might or might not have been her own morbid fancy, she discovered nothing.

The clergyman sent by Bernard being of no imposing personality, or high worldly standing, but only just a poor "coach" at Cambridge, was not invited to stay at the Moat House ; so Miss Thelluson had to entertain him herself till Monday. It was an easy task enough ; he was very meek, very quiet, and very full of admiration of Mr. Rivers, concerning whose college life he told Hannah stories without end. She listened with an interest strangely warm and tender. For the tales were all to his credit, and proved him to have been then as now—a man who, even as a young man, was neither afraid of being good nor ashamed of being amiable. They made her almost forgive herself for another fact which had alarmed and startled her—that she missed him so much.

People of Hannah's character, accustomed of sad necessity to stand alone, until self-dependent solitude becomes second nature, do not often "miss" other people. They like their friends well enough, are glad to meet and sorry to part ; but still no ordinary parting brings with it that intense sense of loss of which Hannah was painfully conscious now her brother-in-law was away. She had thought the child was enough company, and so Rosie was in daylight hours ;

the little imperious darling who ruled Aunt Hannah with a rod of iron, except when Aunt Hannah saw it was for the child's good to govern her, when she turned the tables with a firm gentleness that Rosie never disobeyed. But after Rosie had gone to bed, the blank silence which seemed to fall upon the house was indescribable.

Oh, the lonely tea-table!—for she had abolished seven-o'clock dinners; oh, the empty drawing-room, with its ghostly shadows and strange noises! The happy home felt as dreary as Bernard must have found it after poor Rosa died. In the long hours of evening solitude, Hannah's thoughts, beaten back by the never-ceasing business of the day, returned in battalions, attacking her on every weak side, often from totally opposite sides, so that she retired worsted to her inner self—the little secret chambers which her soul had dwelt in ever since she was a child! Yet even there was no peace now. Bernard had let himself into her heart, with that wonderful key of sympathy which he so well knew how to use, and even in her deepest and most sacred self she was entirely her own no more. Continually she wanted him—to talk to, to argue with, to laugh with, nay, even to laugh at sometimes. She missed him everywhere, in everything, with the bitter want of those who, having lived together for many months, come inevitably, as was before said, either to dislike one another excessively, or—that other alternative which is sometimes the most fatal of the two—to love one another. Such love has a depth and passion to which common feelings can no more be compared than the rolling of a noisy brook to the solemn flow of a silent river, which bears life or death in its waveless but inexorable tide.

Ay, it was life or death. Call affection by what name you will, when it becomes all-absorbing it can, in the case of persons not akin by blood, lead but to one result, the love whose right end is marriage. When Hannah, as her brother-in-law's continued absence gave her more time for solitary reflection than she had had for many months, came face to face with the plain fact, how close they had grown, and how necessary they were to one another, she began, startled, to ask herself, if this so-called sisterly feeling were really sisterly? What if it were not? What if she had deceived herself, and that sweet, sad, morning dream which she had thought protected her from all other dreams of love and marriage, had been, after all, only a dream, and this the reality? Or would it have grown into such, had she and Bernard met as perfect strangers, free to fall in love and marry as strangers do?

"Suppose we had—suppose such a thing had been possible," thought she. And then came a second thought. Why was it impossible? Who made it so—God or man?

Hannah had hitherto never fairly considered the matter, not even when Grace's misery brought it home. With her natural dislike to what she called "walking through muddy water," she had avoided it,



as one does avoid any needlessly unpleasant thing. Now, when she felt herself turning hot and cold at every new idea which entered her mind, and beginning to think of her brother-in-law—not at all as she was wont to think, the question came startlingly—was she right or wrong in so doing? For she was one of those women after the type of Jeanie in “Auld Robin Gray,” to whom the mere fact—

“I daurna think of Jamie, for that wad be a sin,”

was the beginning and end of everything.

But was it a sin? Could she find anything in the Bible to prove it such? She took down a “Concordance,” and searched out all the texts which bore upon the subject, but found none, except that prohibition adduced once by Mrs. Dixon—“Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister *in her lifetime*”—of which the straightforward, natural interpretation was that, consequently, it might be done after her death.

Right or wrong—that, as Mr. Rivers had more than once half satirically told her, was, in all things, the sole question in Hannah's mind. As for the social and legal point—lawful marriage—that, she knew, was impossible; Bernard had said so himself. But was the love which desired marriage—absolute *love*, as distinguished from mere affection—also a sin? If it should spring up in her heart—of his she never thought—should she have to smother it down as a wicked thing?

That was her terror, and that alone. The rest, and whatever it must result in, was mere misery; and Hannah was not afraid of misery, only of sin. Yet, when day after day Bernard's absence lengthened, and except these constant business letters she had no personal tidings whatever from him, there grew in her mind a kind of fear. The house felt so empty without him, that she sometimes caught herself wondering how he managed without her—who brought him his hat and gloves and arranged his daily memoranda—for, like most other excellent men, he was a little disorderly, and very dependent upon the women about him. Who would take care of him and see that he had the food he liked, and the warm wraps he required? All these thoughts came continually back upon Hannah, in a piteously human, tender shape, quite different from that dim dream-love, that sainted remembrance of her lost Arthur. *He* was not a man, like Bernard, helpless even while helpful, requiring one woman's whole thought and care—he was an angel among the angels.

That power which every good man has to turn all his female ministrants into slaves, by being himself the very opposite of a tyrant; who can win from all household hearts the most loyal devotion, because exacting none—this, the best prerogative and truest test of real manhood, was Bernard's in a very great degree. It was, as Hannah had once innocently told him, a blessing to live with him, he made other people's lives so bright. She had no idea how dark the



house could feel till he was gone—till, day after day slipping by, and he not returning, it settled itself for the time into a house without a master, a solar system without a sun.

When she recognised this, the sense of her fast-coming fate darkened down upon Hannah. She was not a young girl, to go on deceiving herself to the end; nay, hers was the kind of nature that cannot deceive itself if it would. During the first week of Bernard's absence she would have almost gone wild sometimes, but for the strong conviction—like poor Grace's, alas!—that she had done nothing wrong, and the feeling, still stronger, that she could always bear anything which only harmed herself.

Then she had the child. In all that dreadful time, which afterwards she looked back upon as a sort of nightmare, she kept Rosie always beside her. Looking in her darling's face—the little fragile flower which had blossomed into strength under her care, the piece of white paper upon which any careless hand might have scribbled anything, to remain indelible through life—then Aunt Hannah took heart even in her misery. She *could* have done no wrong, since, whatever happened to herself, she had saved, by coming to Easterham, the child.

On the second Saturday of Mr. Rivers's absence, Hannah was sitting on the floor with Rosie in the drawing-room, between the lights. It had been a long, wet, winter day, and had begun with a perplexing visit from the churchwarden, wanting to know if the vicar had come home, and, if not, what must be done for Sunday. Hannah had had no letter, and could not tell; could only suggest that a neighbouring clergyman might probably have to be sent for, and arrange who it should be. And the vexed look of the old churchwarden—a respectable farmer—a certain wonder he showed at his principal's long absence—"so very unlike our parson"—together with a slight incivility to herself, which Hannah, so fearfully observant now, fancied she detected in his manner, made her restless and unhappy for hours after. Not till she had Rosie beside her, and drank of the divine lethe-cup which infant hands always bring, did the painful impression subside. Now, in the peace of firelight within, and a last amber gleam of rainy sunset without, she and Rosie had the world all to themselves; tiny fingers curled tightly round hers, with the sweet, imperative "Tannie, tum here!" and a little blue and white fairy held out its mushroom-like frock, with "Rosie dance, Tannie sing!" And Tannie did sing, with a clearness and cheerfulness long foreign to her voice; yet she had had a sweet voice when she was a girl. When this, her daily business of delight, came, the tempting spirits, half angel, half demon, which had begun to play at hide-and-seek through the empty chambers of poor Hannah's heart, fled away, exorcised by that magic spell which heaven gives to every house that owns a child.

She was sitting there, going through "Mary, Mary, quite contrary," "Banbury Cross," the history of the young gentleman who "put in his thumbs and pulled out the plums," with other noble nursery traditions, all sung to tunes composed on the spot, in that sweet, clear soprano which always made Rosie put up her small fingers with a mysterious "Hark! Tannie's singing!" when a ring came to the door-bell.

Hannah's heart almost stopped beating. Should she fly? Then there was a familiar voice in the hall, and Rosie shrieked out in an ecstasy, "Papa come! papa come!" Should she hide? Or should she stay, with the child beside her, a barrier against evil eyes and tongues without, and miserable thoughts within? Yes, that was the best thing, and Hannah did it.

Mr. Rivers came in; and, shaking hands with his sister-in-law, took his little girl in his arms. Rosie clung to him in an ecstasy of delight. She, too, had not forgotten papa.

"I thought she would forget," he said. "Baby memories are short enough."

"But Rosie is not a baby; and papa has only been away eleven days."

Eleven days!—then he would know she had counted them. As soon as the words were uttered, Hannah could have bitten her tongue out with shame.

But no; he did not seem to notice them, or anything but his little girl. He set Rosie on his lap, and began playing with her, but fitfully and absently. He looked cold, pale, ill. At last he said, in a pathetic kind of way—

"Hannah, I wish you would give me a glass of wine. I am so tired."

And the eyes which were lifted up to hers for a minute, had in them a world of weariness and sadness. They drove out of Hannah's mind all thoughts of how and why she and he had parted, and what might happen now they met, and threw her back into the old domestic relationship between them. She took out her keys, got him food and drink, and watched him take both, and revive after them, with almost her old pleasure. Nay, she scarcely missed the old affectionate "Thank you, Hannah, you are so good,"—which never came.

Presently, when Rosie, growing too restless for him, was dismissed with the customary "Do take her, Aunt Hannah, nobody can manage her but you," Hannah carried the little one to bed, and so disappeared, not a word or look having been exchanged between them except about the child. Still, as she left him sitting in his arm-chair by his own fireside, which he said he found so "cosie," she, like little Rosie, was conscious of but one feeling—gladness that papa was come home.

At dinner, too, how the whole table looked bright, now that the

master's place was no longer vacant! Hannah resumed hers; and, in spite of the servants' haunting eyes and greedy ears, on the watch for every look and word that passed between these two innocent sinners, there was a certain peace and content in going back to the old ways once more.

When they were left alone together, over dessert, Mr. Rivers looked round the cheerful room, saying, half to himself, "How comfortable it is to be at home!" and then smiled across the table to her, as if saying mutely what he had said in words a hundred times, that it was she who made his home so comfortable. And Hannah smiled in return, forgetting everything except the pleasantness of having him back again—the pure delight and rest in one another's society, which are at the root of all true friendship, all deep love. They did not talk much, indeed talking seemed dangerous; but they sat a long time in their opposite seats as they had sat day after day for so many months, trying to think, feel, and speak the same as heretofore.

But it was in vain. In this, as in all false positions, the light once admitted could never again be hidden from; the door once opened could never be shut.

Mr. Rivers proposed going to the drawing-room at once. "I want to talk to you; and here the servants might be coming in."

Hannah blushed violently, and then hated herself for doing so. Why should she be afraid of the servants coming in? Why tremble because he "wanted to talk to her?" such a common occurrence,—a bit of their every-day life; which went on, and must go on, externally, just the same as before.

So she rose, and they went into the drawing-room.

It was the prettiest room in the house; full of everything that a man of taste and refinement could desire, in order to make—and it does help to make—a happy home. Yet the master of it looked round with infinite sadness in his eyes, as if it gave him no pleasure, as if he hardly saw it.

"Hannah," he said at last, when they had gone through the form of tea, and she had taken her work—another empty form, for her hands shook so she could hardly thread her needles—"Hannah, I had better not put off my business with you—my message to you, rather. You must understand I fulfil it simply as a matter of duty. I hope you will not be offended?"

"I offended?"

"You ought not to be, I think, in any case. No lady should take offence because an honest man presumes to love her. But I may as well speak out plainly. My friend Morecomb——"

"Oh, is it that matter again? I thought I was to hear no more of it."

"You never would have done from me, but circumstances have altered a little, and I have been overborne by the opinion of others."

"What others?"

"Lady Rivers" (Hannah started angrily). "To her, wisely or foolishly, Morecomb has appealed; and, by her advice, has again written to me. They both put it to me that it is my duty, as your brother-in-law, once more to lay the matter before you, and beg you to reconsider your decision. His letter—which I do not offer to show you, for he might not like it, and, besides, there are things said in it to myself which none but a very old friend would venture to say—his letter is thoroughly straightforward, manly, and generous. It makes me think, for the first time, that he is almost worthy of you. In it he says—may I repeat to you what he says?"

Hannah bent her head.

"That his conviction of your worth and his attachment to yourself is such, that if you will only allow him to love you he shall be satisfied, and trust to time for the rest. He entreats you to marry him at once, and let him take you from Easterham, and place you in the position which, as his wife, you would of course have, and which he knows—we all know—you would so worthily fill."

Bernard had said all this like a person speaking by rote, repeating carefully and literally all that he had before planned to say, and afraid of committing himself by the alteration of a word. Now he paused, and waited for an answer.

It came not.

"He desires me to tell you that, besides the rectory, he has a good private income; that his two daughters are both married; and that, in case of his death, you will be well provided for. It is a pleasant parish and a charming house. You would have a peaceful home, away, and yet not very far away, from Easterham. You might see Rosie every week——"

Here Hannah turned slowly round, and for the first time Bernard saw her face.

"Good heavens!" he cried. "What have I done? I meant no harm—Morecomb meant no harm."

"No," she answered, in a hard, dry tone. "He meant—I quite understand it, you see, and, since I understand it, why should I not speak of it?—he meant to stop the mouths of Easterham by marrying me, and taking me away from your house. He is exceedingly kind—and you also."

"I?—oh, Hannah!—I?"

"Why distress yourself? Do I not say you are exceedingly kind?"

But she seemed hardly to know what she was saying. Her horrible, humiliating position between her brother-in-law and her brother-in-law's friend, the one having unwillingly affixed the stain upon her name, which the other was generously trying to remove, burst upon her with an agony untold.

"Why did I ever come here? Why were you so cruel as to ask me to come here? I came in all innocence. I knew nothing. You, a man, ought to have known."

He turned deadly pale.

"You mean to say I ought to have known that, although the law considers you my sister, you are not my sister, and our living together as we do would expose us to remarks such as James Dixon made the other night. Most true; I ought to have known. Was that all? or did you mean anything more than that?"

"Nothing more. Is not that enough? Oh, it is dreadful—dreadful for an innocent woman to have to bear!"

And her self-control quite gone, Hannah rocked herself to and fro, in such a passion of grief as she had never let any one witness in her since she was a child. For, indeed, woman as she was, she felt weak as a child.

But the man was weaker still. Once—twice, he made a movement as if he would dart across the hearth to where she sat; but restrained himself, and remained motionless in his seat—attempting no consolation. What consolation could he give? It was he himself who had brought this slander upon her—how cruel and how widespread it was he by this time knew, even better than she.

"Hannah," he said, after a little, "we are neither of us young people, to take fright at shadows. Let us speak openly together, as if we were two strangers, viewing the case of two other strangers, placed in the same relation together as ourselves."

"Speak? how can I speak? I am utterly helpless, and you know it. Lady Rivers knows it too; and so, doubtless, does Mr. Morecomb. Perhaps, after all, I should be wisest to accept his generous offer and marry him."

Bernard started, and then composed himself into the same formal manner with which he had conducted the whole conversation.

"Yes, in a worldly point of view, it would be wise; I, speaking as your brother-in-law, am bound to tell you so. I wish to do my duty by you; I have no right to allow my own or my child's interest to stand in the way of your happiness." He paused. "I wish you to be happy—God knows I do!" He paused again. "Then—what answer am I to give to Morecomb? Am I to tell him to come here and speak for himself?"

"No!" Hannah burst out vehemently. "No—a thousand times no! My heart is my own, and he has not got it. If I were a beggar starving in the streets, or a poor wretch whom everybody pointed the finger at—as perhaps they do—I would not marry Mr. Morecomb."

A strange light came into Bernard's eyes.

"That's Hannah! There speaks my good, true Hannah! I thought she had gone away, and some other woman come in her place. For-

give me! I did my duty; but oh! it was hard! I am so glad, so glad!"

He spoke with his old, affectionate, boyish impulsiveness; he was still exceedingly boyish in some things, and perhaps Hannah liked him the better for it—who knows? Even now a faint smile passed over her lips.

"You ought to have known me better. You ought to have been sure that I would not marry any man without loving him. And I told you long ago that I did not love Mr. Morecomb."

"You did; but people sometimes change their minds. And love comes, we know not how. It begins—just a little seed, as it were—and grows, and grows, till all of a sudden we find it a full-grown plant, and we cannot root it up, however we try."

He spoke dreamily, and as if he had forgotten all about Mr. Morecomb, then sat down and began gazing into the fire with that dull apathetic look so familiar to Hannah during the early time of her residence there, when she knew him little, and cared for him less; when, if any one had told her there would come to her such a day as this day, when every word of the sentence he had just uttered would fall on her heart like a drop of burning lead, she would have pronounced it impossible—ridiculously impossible. Yet she was true then—true now—to herself and to all others; perfectly candid and sincere. But would the world ever believe it? Does the world, so ready to find out double or interested motives, ever believe in conscientious turncoats, righteous renegades? Yet there are such things.

After awhile Mr. Rivers suddenly aroused himself.

"I am thinking of other matters, and forgetting my friend. I had better put the good man out of his pain by telling him the truth at once, had I not, Hannah?"

"Certainly."

"Your decision is quite irrevocable?"

"Quite."

"Then we need say no more. I will write the letter at once."

But that seemed not so easily done as said. After half an hour or more he came back with it unfinished in his hand.

"I hardly know how to say what you wish me to say. A mere blank No, without any reasons given. Are there none which could make the blow fall lighter? Remember, the man loves you, Hannah, and love is a precious thing."

"I know it is, when one has love to give back; but I have none. Not an atom."

"Why not? I beg your pardon—I ought not to ask—I have not the slightest right to ask. Still, as I have sometimes thought, a woman seldom lives thirty years without—without some sort of attachment."

Hannah became much agitated. Rosa, then, had kept sisterly faith, even towards her own husband. Mr. Rivers evidently knew nothing about Arthur; had been all along quite unaware of that sad but sacred story, which Hannah thought sheltered her just as much as widow's weeds might have done.

She hesitated, and then, in her misery, she clung to the past as a kind of refuge from the present.

"I thought you knew it," she answered very slowly and quickly; "I thought Rosa had told you. If it will lessen his pain, you may tell Mr. Morecomb that once I was engaged to be married to a cousin of mine. He was ill: they sent him away to Madeira, and there he died."

"He—I did not quite hear." For, indeed, Hannah's words were all but inaudible.

"He died!"

She had said it out now, and Bernard knew the whole. Those two silent ghosts, of his dead wife and her own dead lover, seemed to come and stand near them in the quiet room. Was it with looks of sorrow or anger?—if the dead can feel either. Arthur—Rosa—in their lives both so loving, unselfish, and dear. Was it of them that the living needed to be afraid?

Mr. Rivers seemed not afraid, only exceedingly and painfully surprised.

"I had no idea of such a thing, or I would never have urged Mr. Morecomb's plea. And yet, tell me, Hannah, is this lost love the only cause of your refusing him? Was this what you referred to when you once said to me, or implied, that you would never marry anybody? Is all your heart, your warm, true, womanly heart, buried in your cousin's grave?"

There may be circumstances in which people are justified in telling a noble lie; but Hannah was not the woman to do it. Not though it would at once have placed her beyond the reach of misconstruction, saved her from all others, and from herself—encompassed her henceforward with a permanent shield. Though one little "Yes" would have accomplished all this, she could not say it, for she felt it would have been a lie—a lie to heaven and to her own soul. She looked down on the floor, and answered deliberately—"No!"

But the effort took all her strength, and when it was over she rose up tottering, and tried to feel her way to the door. Mr. Rivers opened it, not making the least effort to detain her.

"Good-night!" she said, as she passed him. He, without even an offered hand, said "Good-night," too; and so they parted.

## MICHEL DE MONTAIGNE.

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OF all the thousands of writers of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, whose names and works are recorded in the history of literature, a few scores of names only have become household words among the men of this nineteenth century. And, considering all the calls on the attention and time of the present generation made by its own literature, the continued existence of any past name among us as a generally known and household word must be held to imply no small degree of eminence and merit. But of this small band of survivors—of these few scores of names which still are on the tongues of all men—a very much smaller and more select band is that which is composed of the old writers who are still really read.

And of this very select and small company Michel de Montaigne is one.

He is, further, one of the yet more restricted number, of whom it may be said that they have reached, as it were, a phase of rejuvenescence. Not only has Montaigne always been read, but he is read more now than he was during any part of the eighteenth century. Of course, it is not meant simply that he is now read by a greater number of individuals; for the infinite increase in the number of readers might account for this fact without any necessity for inferring thence an increased popularity. But it may be safely asserted that, with due reference to proportion in this respect, Montaigne is much more generally known and appreciated now than he was an hundred years ago.

Nevertheless, so terribly full are our nineteenth century lives, and so stringent the deplorable inelasticity of the twenty-four hours to the day, and seven days to the week, that many a man who has heard of Montaigne all his life—and not a few who, having some vague idea of the general nature of his writings, and perhaps not even that, yet frequently speak of him as of an acquaintance—has never looked into his pages. It may be supposed that they would fain do so, did time and the hour permit it. And, since that cannot be, some such short account of the man and of his works, as may be put into the space and form of a magazine article, may be not unacceptable.

In the first place, what are the qualities which have caused the phenomenon we have been stating? What is it that has enabled Montaigne to float still a strong swimmer beneath the glimpses of the moon, he alone of all his French contemporaries, while black oblivion has engulfed, or all but engulfed, all those others?

In seeking a reply to this question, we may begin by observing that



Michel de Montaigne, besides belonging, as has been said, to the small band of survivors whose works are still really read after the lapse of three centuries, is in a special and very notable manner one of that little and privileged knot of writers of whom succeeding generations love to speak and think as of a personal acquaintance and friend. The names of the genial compeers of that immortal round table, where the peaked beard of Montaigne wags above the board between his admiring juniors, Burton and Sir Thomas Brown, might be enumerated within a very moderate compass, But they will readily occur to the reader, who will have no difficulty in recognising the type of writers of whom we are speaking. They are the men whom the world affects to call by some pet name, who are always spoken of with more of the familiarity of affection than of the formality of respect, and who are never mentioned without the addition of some kindly epithet, which adheres to them as closely as the Homeric "Swift-of-foot" does to Achilles. They are "old John" this, "rare Ben" that, "quaint Tom" t'other. Montaigne owns fellowship with all these worthies.

And this is a mark characteristic of all the company, and of our kindly Michel as much as of any one of them—that the world loves, remembers, and prizes them, not so much for what they have said, as for their manner of saying it. "*Le style, c'est l'homme*," says the French critic. And the dictum is especially true of the writers belonging to the class of whom we are speaking. They have so put themselves and their own individuality into their writings that the reader feels, not as if he were gathering information through the medium of paper and print (which, excellent as the invention is, stands like a very undiaphanous screen between one human soul and another), but as if he were listening to the chat of a very delightful companion. Hence the airs of intimacy which the world of readers assumes in speaking of these men.

And it is to be observed further, that these facts explain not only the popularity of such writers, but the causes of the permanency of that popularity also. With the exception of chroniclers, from whose pages historians have perhaps not yet succeeded in wringing the last drop of truth that may be got from them, what book of two hundred—ay, or of one hundred years old—can ever be opened for the sake of the matter it has to impart to us? It is all *connu, connu*! The world has got on too far ahead. But for the manner of the writer—the "style," which is the man! This is the charm which is in its nature immortal.

And to the present writer such reflections seem to be entirely applicable to our well-loved Michel de Montaigne. No doubt there are many men, lovers of old books, and in some cases lovers of old times, who would exclaim against such a notion as a heresy of the most detestable kind, conclusive as to the self-sufficient ignorance of the utterer of it. They will assert that lessons of wisdom for the

conduct of life of the most practically valuable kind are yet to be learned from the old Gascon philosopher. They will maintain that specially as a master in the science of mankind he is still supreme. They will assure you that he who would sound and understand the human heart and its weaknesses, he who would school his own against them, he who would learn to practise a philosophy of life profound in its wisdom, because of the largest in its humanity, can do no better than "turn over with a daily, turn over with a nightly hand" the pages of Montaigne.

But to the present writer this seems to be an illusion the cause of which it is not difficult to imagine. The student who would feed his mind with all the good things enumerated in the preceding paragraph, can, it is submitted, do better than go to Montaigne for them. Not that nothing of the sort is to be found in his pages. That is far, very far, from being the case. But let a moralist, full fed with the current literature and speculations of the present day, go to Montaigne's pages to seek the philosophy to be found in them, totally regardless of all the charms of the great writer's style, wholly uninterested by the *naïveté* of the self-revelations he is so liberal of, careless of the historico-social speculations called forth by the fact that such a man should have so thought and so written at such a time and under such circumstances, and he will hardly need a more irresistible proof of the reality of the world's progress. Such a seeker would find the maxims of wisdom very trite, the speculations very jejune, the morality very superficial, the world-knowledge very shallow. But then such a seeker, such a reader, never does look into Montaigne's book. The men who read Montaigne are those who look for and are competent to find all those other charms which we have been supposing our student moralist to neglect. And, as has been said, it is not difficult to imagine the nature of the illusion, which predisposes such men to find in the subject matter of the old philosopher's writings all those valuable things which have been above rehearsed. There is the prestige of antiquity, which adds the authority of venerability to cathedraic precepts. There is the charm of style, which, specially heightened and flavoured by the racy quaintness of an old-world diction, has the effect of adding new point and weight to dicta, which have since been said to far greater effect, because said in connection with a wider science, and based on far more extended generalizations. There is also, contributing to the same result, a feeling which, however little men may be conscious of its operation, is probably hardly ever altogether absent from the mental attitude, with which we contemplate the operation of the minds of men of long-passed generations. It is a pleasurable feeling arising from the recognition of a similarity to our modes of thinking and reasoning in beings divided from us by vast spaces of time. "Nay, sir," said Dr. Johnson of the dancing dogs, "the creature, it is true, dances ill, but the wonder is that it should do it at all!" And

it may perhaps be said, without intending any of the disrespect to those who have gone before us that the implied analogy might seem to involve, that a complacent though not self-conscious feeling of a somewhat similar kind mingles with the half-surprised recognition of modes of thought that we know as our own, in those who, as we cannot help perceiving, are to us ever as children.

If, however, the student of morals and of man, who is conversant with the present aspects of those studies and with the best modern literature in which those aspects are presented, cannot be counselled to turn to the pages of Montaigne with the hope of finding much that will be suggestive or useful to him, very different advice may be offered to the purely literary *dilettante*. French critics are never weary of enlarging on the very special and individual beauties of the style of the old Gascon philosopher, and the alluring charm of his manner; of the latter, much may be appreciated and enjoyed in a good translation, and perhaps the version most to be recommended for the purpose is still that which Shakespeare is proved to have possessed and to have used—"The Essays of Michael Lord of Montaigne, done into English by John Florio. London, 1603. Folio." This is, as might be expected, a very scarce book; but it was reprinted at London in 1613, and again in 1632.

With regard to the former of the attractions mentioned in the preceding paragraph, of course little of the beauty of style can be tasted by those who are not able to read the essays in the language in which the country-gentleman philosopher wrote them. And it may be admitted at once that the vast majority of those who have learned French only as it is usually taught in commercial academies and ladies' schools, or who have acquired it merely by residence in France, would find Montaigne very difficult reading; but the old Gascon would be intelligible enough to tolerably competent Latin scholars. The difficulty he presents arises wholly and solely from archaic modes of spelling and obsolete words and form and expressions. His style, properly so called, is always, or almost always, beautifully pellucid. None of the special difficulties, for example, would be found which render the study of Rabelais so thorny. And as regards mere phraseology, the difference in favour of the later writer is curiously greater than one would have *a priori* expected from the space of less than half a century which separated them.

In fact, there are few writers—perhaps it would be more correct to say that there is not one—to whom the French tongue is more deeply indebted for the improvement of the language into the polished instrument which modern writers find ready to their hand. He was indeed a greater benefactor in this kind than he would have been if he had been a less lawless, wilful, and audacious writer than he was. He had no models, and he owned subjection to no rules. He wrote precisely as it pleased his own fancy; he compelled his pen to follow his thoughts, and he let the latter wander as they would. No phrase,

no metaphor, no similitude, was rejected by him if it served well and truly for the forcible expression of his thought; and he hesitated not to coin new words whenever he wanted them and could find them. Many of the terms thus imported into the language by him have permanently remained to enrich it; and many more have been rejected by the modern masters of the language which, as Le Clerc admits, might have been advantageously retained. Words now so common and accepted as "gratitude," "diversion," "enfantillage," "enjoué," are cited by Le Clerc as among a very much greater number which the language owes to Montaigne. Among others, which the same critic cites as words found in the *Essays*, but which are not now extant in modern French, several have, at all events, become perfectly naturalized on our side of the Channel, as "condiment," "equanimité," "improvidence," "inanité," "magnifier," "procerité," &c.

It is somewhat curious that a writer of such habits and proclivities should have been a great advocate for the establishment of an Academy in France, the main result of the establishment of which has been to keep poor the language which he did so much to enrich, and one of whose first cares was to banish many of the words and phrases which he had introduced. The worthy Gascon was, however, by no means ready to yield his notions upon such points to the dicta of authority in his own day, as is shown in a remarkable manner by a very amusing story told by his friend and contemporary Etienne Pasquier, in one of his letters (*Lett. xviii. 1*).

Pasquier and Montaigne were walking together in the court of the Chateau de Blois during the holding there of the States-General in 1588, when, the conversation turning on literary matters, Pasquier could not help remarking to his friend, that in many points of his book—the immortal *Essays*—there was to be found, "je ne sais quoi du ramage gascon." "And as he would not believe me," continues Pasquier, "I took him to my chamber, where I had his book, and there pointed out to him many words which are familiar, not to Frenchmen, but only to Gascons, as 'un patenostre,' 'un debte,' 'un recontre;' and such phrases as 'ces ouvrages sentent à l'huile,' or 'à la lampe.' Especially I showed him that he used the word 'jouir' altogether after the fashion of Gascony, and not according to the practice of our French tongue, as 'la santé que je jouis jusques à present,' 'l'amitié est jouie à mesure qu'elle est désirée,' 'la vraie solitude se peut jouir au milieu des villes,' &c. Many other phrases did I point out to him, not only with regard to this word, but to many others also. And I imagined that he would order all these things to be corrected in the next then forthcoming edition of his book. But not only did he do nothing of the sort, but when it came to pass that he was overtaken by death, his adopted daughter caused everything to be printed exactly as it stood, and in her preliminary letter told us that his widow had sent her the MS. in the condition in which he had intended that it should appear."

Pasquier's surprise that his old friend should have declined to alter his language in accordance with his own well-meant critical observations, seems hardly consistent with a very intimate knowledge of the man, or even with a very accurate acquaintance with his works. For Montaigne, in more than one passage, very openly expresses his preference for the Gascon idiom, glorifies himself on his Gasconism, and declares his purpose and will to be and to remain a Gascon and a Gascon writer. And it is very curious to a critical student of the history of the French language that such should have been the notions of one who is admitted, by the most competent authorities on the subject, to have done so much for the enriching, moulding, and fashioning of the modern French idiom. It is curious, also, as bearing on the question at issue between the advocates and opponents of national literary academies, to find such opinions and preferences as those above shown to have been held by Montaigne, in one who earnestly called for the foundation of a French Academy. Those who think that such institutions are hurtful to the best interest of literature rather than calculated to promote them, are justified, it may well be urged, in declining to admit that the celebrated Gascon writer is to be reckoned among their adversaries. For it is clear that what Montaigne wanted when he advocated the establishment of an Academy, was something very different from the institution which has so powerfully influenced the whole course of development of French literature. Had he foreseen exactly the nature, manner, and consequence of the operation of the French Academy, he would probably have said that academies, like some other things, are excellent servants, but very bad and tyrannical masters.

To return, however, for one word more respecting that quality of "quaintness" and simplicity which imparts so much of the charm which modern readers find in many old writers, and very notably in Montaigne. It is to be remembered that much illusion is produced by considering this to arise from qualities inherent in the writer. It is produced, in most cases, simply by the distance of time which separates the writer from the reader. The "simplicity," which delights us, is due to the fact that men's thoughts two or three hundred years ago were not laden, complicated, and diversified by all the wealth of speculation and knowledge which have since been added to the human stock. And the "quaintness" is simply the result of the difference of time, and the comparatively unformed condition of the language those writers had to use. Had the same men written in our own day, they would not have written "quaintly." In the remarks of children a similarly amusing simplicity and quaintness may often be observed. And a few generations hence the writers, who would be the last that we should think of crediting or taxing with quaintness, will be found as quaint as we find the writings of Montaigne.

There are, however, qualities very intrinsically the special pro-

perties of the man, which have been very influential in making the style and manner of Montaigne's writings what they are. His immensely strong feeling of personality is the principal of these. Hardly any writer ever made so great and constant use of the capital *I*, and certainly none ever has been so entirely pardoned by his readers for the abuse of it. In fact, the main subject of the *Essays* is Michel de Montaigne himself; and in more than one passage he pretty well tells us that such is the case, and that he intends such to be the case. But one of the merits which may most readily cause the egoism of a writer to be forgiven by his reader, Montaigne had to perfection—sincerity in self-portraiture. Moreover, though it is impossible to mistake the true Gascon vanity of the man, it is evident that he sets about the process of autopsy with the sincerest conviction that so he will really be able to bring forth that something "*utile, quod æquè pauperibus prodest locupletibus æquè; æquè neglectum scribis puerisque nocebit.*" In fact, it is this continual reference to and miniature painting of himself that produces that sense of acquaintanceship and companionship between the writer and the reader, which is perhaps the principal source of the universally admitted attractiveness of Montaigne's writings, and one of the most marked features of that *manner* which has been declared to be the real merit, for the sake of which a few hours of our sorely-occupied time may yet be bestowed on them.

But it was hinted at the opening of this paper that there is one other point of view, equally distinct from any value, which the *Essays* may be supposed still to possess as moral teaching, from which they may be considered with great interest. And this is their value as documents in the history of social progress—especially, of course, of French social progress. "The *Essays* of Montaigne form an epoch," says Buckle ("*History of Civilization*," vol. i. p. 473), "not only in the literature, but in the civilization of France. This"—the publication of the *Essays*—"is the first open declaration of that scepticism, which towards the end of the sixteenth century publicly appeared in France."

Montaigne was born at a time when France was about to enter on a period that French critics have generally been accustomed to call one of the most disastrous in the course of her history. There have been so many later periods more truly disastrous, and the whole course of French history from the days of the *Ligne* downwards, from phase to phase of it, has been so manifestly calculated according to the most commonly understood sequence of social cause and effect, to lead to each successive deterioration, that, bad as were the days of the latter Valois kings, there does not seem to be any historical propriety in stigmatizing them as a specially calamitous period of French annals. But the miseries, follies, meannesses, and stupidities which were then wrecking France, and preparing the way for worse wreck to come, were of such a special nature, as to make the appear-

ance of such a man as Montaigne in the midst of them in no ordinary degree a remarkable phenomenon. And it is no exaggerated statement to say that if France had produced a few score more of such minds, all her then immediate fortunes and subsequent destiny might have been very far other than they were and have been. Le Clerc says that Montaigne was a more considerable man, as compared with the generation in which he lived, than either Cicero or Voltaire. And to the present writer the judgment seems a correct one, especially as regards the comparison with Voltaire.

Of course the causes of the evils, which were rending the body of French society in twain during the reigns of the last Valois kings, and were normally preparing a due crop of always increasing evils to follow, were manifold. But it would not probably be far from the truth to assert that the worst, most prominent, most hopeless, and most radical of these causes was the absence of toleration; and the absolute incapacity of *all* the men of the time to conceive the idea that tolerance was a good, a desirable, or a possible thing. Now, Montaigne was the most tolerant of men. Toleration of the opinions, and even to a great degree of the conduct, of others, is the key-stone of his philosophy and the key-note of his writings. It is in this respect that he was so remarkably in advance of his age, and truly the degree of the advance may be said to have been infinite. Of course men, whose tone of mind is essentially opposed to that of the old Gascon philosopher, will urge, as always, that tolerance is the offspring, the necessary and natural offspring, of indifference. The assertion is incorrect. It would be more accurate to say that tolerance is the result of doubt in the mind of him who is tolerant. But neither is this always true, save in the great and predominating subject of religion. In that chapter it *is* true. And it is only the recognition of the impossibility of certainty upon the subject, that relieves any man from the duty of knocking an heretical teacher of religion on the head, as he would a mad dog. "Upon that tenet (that belief in the doctrines of the Church was essential to salvation), whether it be held by Papist or Protestant," says Southey ("Book of the Church," vol. ii., p. 29), "toleration becomes what it has so often been called, soul murder; persecution is in the strictest sense a duty; and it is an act of religious charity to burn heretics alive, for the purpose of deterring others from damnation." This is undeniable. But Southey, who is always singularly blind to the degree in which his arguments against Romanism cut the ground from under the feet of Protestant believers, goes on to say very weakly that "the tenet is proved to be false by its intolerable consequences." Nay, it is proved to be false only by the recognition of the impossibility of certainty upon any part of the subject. And it is notable enough that Montaigne should have discovered this for himself, while it was hidden from such a man as Sir Thomas More. But in Montaigne's day nobody save himself recognised this impossibility. It was an extremely reli-



gious age. Never did that all-pervadingness of religion, which causes it to enter as a leading motive into all public and all private conduct, and which is deemed by many so great a desideratum in our own day, more powerfully influence any society. It is true that few have ever been more utterly and generally profligate in regard to moral conduct. But none the less were religious questions the leading occupation of men's minds, and religious differences the main motives of their public conduct in that day. The compatibility of the two conditions is amusingly expressed in that saying of certain ladies of Montaigne's day, that they would rather charge their consciences with twelve lovers than with one mass.

Now, Montaigne was above all else a sceptic. Scepticism upon every sort of subject that can occupy the human mind made the very substratum of his mental constitution, and was habitually cultivated by him in all his speculations and philosophizings. The general outcome of these was expressed in the well-known motto which he took to himself as setting forth the sum of his thoughts and experiences, "*QUE SAIS-JE ?*" He had come to the conclusion that "there is nothing certain save uncertainty." "The persuasion of certitude," he tells us in another place, "is a sure mark of folly and of extreme incertitude." "Is it not better," he asks again, "to remain in suspense than to fall into so many errors which human phantasy has produced?" Fontenelle, towards the end of his life, declared himself to be dismayed at the certitude he saw around him on all sides. On which Le Clerc remarks that the saying is profound, and is worth a whole page of history. Truly he might have said that it was worth very many volumes.

Fontenelle was then at least thus far a disciple of our philosopher. But the world had moved on a good bit when Fontenelle made the above reflection. Remembering what it was when Montaigne lived and wrote, it cannot be doubted that his philosophy was very partially acceptable to the men of his own generation. Yet Pasquier was his friend, and De Thou his ardent admirer. And we may well consider such names as more than counterbalancing the disapproval of such men as Malebranche and Balzac. But there is another name far greater than either of these, which one is sorry to find on the list of Montaigne's detractors and revilers.

This is Pascal.

Pascal is, one may say, unmeasured in his abuse of Montaigne. He calls him a "dishonest man," "an odious man," and stigmatises all those really beautiful considerations by which Montaigne seeks to prepare and arm us against the King of Terrors, as the drivelling of a man who is only thinking of dying like a coward and a Sybarite. It is very curious to find such a mind as that of Pascal thus savagely hostile to such another as that of Montaigne; and one asks oneself the cause of such fierce denunciation and dislike. The cause, as it seems to the present writer, is not far to seek. It is a notable instance



of the operation of that terrible passion, the *odium theologicum*. It has been said that tolerance may exist unaccompanied by indifferentism or doubt on every other subject save that of religion. But Montaigne's tolerance was bounded by no such exception. It is impossible to read his Essays without perceiving very clearly that he doubted respecting many things, assured certainty regarding which is essential to the faithful Christian. "Mr. Hallam," says Buckle (note to p. 474, "History of Civilisation"), "says that his scepticism is not displayed in religion." But if we use the word religion in its ordinary sense, as connected with dogma, it is evident from Montaigne's language that he was a sceptic, and an unflinching one too. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that all religious opinions are the result of custom. "Comme de vray nous n'avons aultre mire de la verité et della raison, que l'exemple et idée des opinions et usances du pais ou nous sommes : là est (tousjours) la parfaicte religion, la parfaicte police, parfaict et accomply usage de toutes choses" ("Essais de Montaigne," liv. i. ch. 30). "As a natural consequence," continues Buckle, "he lays down that religious error is not criminal. The fact seems to be," he sums up, "that Montaigne, while recognising abstractedly the existence of religious truths, doubted our capacity for knowing them; that is to say, he doubted if, out of the immense number of religious opinions, there were any means of ascertaining which were accurate." "Nothing of this sort," continues Buckle, in a subsequent note, after citing other passages from our author decisively indicative of the most frank scepticism—"nothing of this sort had ever appeared before in the French language." When he was at Rome his writings were censured *pro forma*. But when he was about to quit the Eternal City, the maestro of the apostolic palace, much more anxious to act the courteous host to so distinguished a guest than to ensure the purity of religious faith, whispered in his ear to take no notice of the censures on his book, counselling him, however, only to cancel the word "fortune," which was held to be objectionable. But we all know what religious faith at Rome was in the days of Pope Buoncompagni, Gregory XIII. ! And Pascal, earnest after a very different fashion, smelt the heresy of Montaigne's mind and writings with the unerring instinct of a true Churchman, and hated the man accordingly.

It must not be imagined, however, that Montaigne was by any means a professed unbeliever. Very far from it. He died in the act of raising himself painfully in his bed to join his hands in prayerful veneration of the elevation of the host, in the course of the service being performed in his sick chamber. Nor at any period of his life did he express disbelief in any fact or doctrine that the Catholic Church required him to believe. But Montaigne was as inconsistent in this respect as very many other men are. He would fain have been not sceptical in the matter of religion. But his nature was too strong for him. His whole intellect was sceptical. He received no opinion on any subject without proceeding at once to ascertain for himself

what was to be said on the other side of the question. If you had proposed to him the controversy between the little-endians and the big-endians he would have made an excellent defence on either side, and then have left the matter with his favourite *que sais-je?*

Of course his more recent orthodox fond admirers—such men as La Clere, for instance—try hard to show that there is no irreligious tendency in Montaigne's writings. They, unlike Pascal, are men to whose heart the glory of French literature sits far nearer than the interests of the purity of religious doctrine. But for the sake of the *convenances*, it has to be maintained that so great a writer as Montaigne was all right upon that head. And a very difficult job they have of it. But if they would content themselves with showing that his unbounded toleration was in no degree the outcome of indifferentism to truth, so far as it is attainable by the human mind, they might make a better fight of it. Here is a golden passage from his celebrated "Essay on the Education of Children," the 25th of the 1st Book, which is indicative of a conscience very beautifully sensitive to the value of truth and of truthfulness: "And above all, let a child be taught to yield, and give up his arms to the truth, as soon as ever he shall perceive either that it is springing into life in the hands of his opponent, or that it has been born in his own mind by means of some better after-thought." A golden lesson in truth!

No author, so far as is known to the present writer, has formed so just an appreciation of the importance and bearing of the position occupied by Montaigne in the history of French literature and civilization, as Buckle; and the reader, who is interested in the subject, would do well to turn to the passage above referred to in the "History of Civilization" and read the entire passage.

It remains only for the fulfilment of the purpose of this paper, to give a brief statement of the leading facts of Montaigne's personal history.

In the first place it appears that Montaigne was by extraction an Englishman! His real family name was Eyquem—Michel Eyquem, Seigneur de Montaigne—the latter being the name of a small property which he inherited from his father, with a chateau still extant, in the commune of Saint Michel, the arrondissement of Bergerac, and canton of Velires, department of the Dordogne. The family name, however, would seem to have been finally disused during the time of our author.

It must not be supposed from the phrases of French writers, who are wont to speak of Montaigne as a "gentilhomme de campagne," "le philosophe campagnard," &c., that he had no experiences of the great world, that his life was passed in retirement, or that his education was that of most country gentlemen of his time. His education was a specially learned one; insomuch that, owing to the anxious care of his father directed to this end, his earliest language was Latin. His first employment was that of a "Conseiller au Parlement de Bordeaux," and he became *invité Minervá*, a courtier.

It will be the best and shortest plan, however, to give a few dates of the leading incidents of his career.

He was born on the 29th February, at the Chateau de St. Michel-de-Montaigne, in the year 1533, which was the eighteenth of the reign of Francis I. At six years old, speaking Latin as his ordinary tongue, he is sent to the College de Guienne at Bordeaux. In 1554, the twenty-first of his age, and the seventh of the reign of Henry II., he is appointed "Conseiller au Parlement de Bordeaux." In 1559, Francis II. having in that year succeeded to Henry II., killed in a tournament, Montaigne is found in the month of September a follower of the Court at Bar-le-Duc. Charles IX. succeeds on the 5th December, 1560, and Montaigne accompanies the Court to Rouen. In 1566 Montaigne marries Françoise de la Chassaigne, daughter of a "Conseiller au Parlement de Bordeaux." His father, born in 1490, having died in 1569, and an elder brother having died, Montaigne in 1570 succeeds to his paternal inheritance, throws up his appointment at Bordeaux, "quits the robe for the sword," goes to reside in his chateau, and probably begins to write his essays, being then in his thirty-seventh year. Henry III. succeeds to Charles IX. 30th May, 1574. In 1580 the first edition of the *Essays*, consisting of the two first books only, was published at Bordeaux. In the same year, being attacked by a malady which more or less tormented him during the remainder of his life, he went to travel in Germany and Italy, mainly for the purpose of visiting sundry mineral springs. He passed five months of the year 1581 at Rome, and having gone thence to the baths of Lucca, he there hears, on the 7th September, that he has been elected Mayor of Bordeaux. He returns to Rome, and thence to France. In 1582 he is found at the court of Henry III. on business connected with the affairs of Bordeaux. In 1584 he is re-elected to serve a second time as Mayor of Bordeaux. In 1586 civil war and pestilence force him to quit his home; and in 1588 the fifth edition of his *Essays*, now enlarged by the addition of a third book, and many addenda to the previous ones, is published at Paris. In this year the meeting between him and Pasquier, which has been mentioned in the earlier pages of this paper, took place at Blois. Henry IV. succeeds to the throne in 1589. During the years 1590 and 1591 Montaigne continued to make additions to the *Essays*, and dies on the 18th September, in the year 1592, in the sixtieth year of his age.

He said of himself, undoubtedly with the most perfect sincerity, what very few men, if ever any, have ventured or been able to say of themselves: "If I had to live again, I would live again as I have lived."

These remarkable words are found in the second essay of the third book, and were, therefore, written when he was very near the end of the life on which he looked back with so perfect a contentment.

T. A. TROLLOPE.

## NIGHT AND MORNING.

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It is over now, she is gone to rest—  
I have clasp'd the hands on the quiet breast :  
Draw back the curtain, let in the light,  
She will never shrink if it be too bright.

We were two in here but an hour gone by,  
No streak was there in the midnight sky ;  
Now I am one to watch the day  
Come glimmering up from the far away.

What will he say when he comes in,  
Waked by the city's morning din ;  
Groping to find and fearing to know  
The sorrow he left but an hour ago ?

What will he say who has watched so long  
When he shall find who has come and gone ?  
Come a watcher that will not bide  
Love's morning or noon or even-tide.

He thought to kiss her by morning grey,  
But God has thought to take her away :  
What will he say ? God knows, not I—  
" Good night," he said, but never " good bye."

C. FRASER-TYTLER.

## THE LITERARY LIFE.

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### I.

BEGINNERS in Literature, or those who think of beginning, must be very much puzzled with the confusion of statement in what they read and what they hear about a literary life, taken in connection with their own observation and experience, if they have a little of either. Take the case of a young fellow who either is or thinks himself very clever ; who reads (as he may read in a dozen respectable places) that editors are only too glad to enlist fresh talent under their flags ; and who yet, while frequently sending papers to magazines whose editors he reasonably presumes to be discriminating, is always getting them returned. The conventional stroke of politeness (upon which a word of justification by-and-by), that the rejection of a proffered contribution does not necessarily imply that it wants merit, will hardly console him much, or clear up his bewilderment. And, in truth, I do not know that the case has ever been fairly and exhaustively stated.

Take, again, deliverances like that of Dickens, who, over and over again declared, in print and out of it, that all the talk about literary cliques barring the way of the young adventurer, about lions in the path, and the rest of it, was nonsense ; he never found any lions in the way ; and success in literature turned exclusively upon the same points as success anywhere else, such as merit, perseverance, and so on. How would this have sounded to Jean Paul, starving for ten years because the public would not listen to him ? His was a peculiar case ; but there are thousands of people to whom such words as those of Dickens must seem false and cruel.

Let us try and make a little *honest* way into the question. I promise not to shirk a single point that occurs to me, out of my own experience or otherwise, or knowingly to overstate or understate a single fact.

In the first place, then, success, great or small, in literature, depends upon the same conditions as good fortune of all other kinds in this mixed and trying world. Much depends upon what we call chance. The good tradesman may be sent to the wall by the bad ; the brave soldier does *not* always, or usually, carry a marshal's baton in his knapsack, or even, as a rule, get the recognition he deserves, as desert goes under the sun. There is a chance of success for every man who tries after it. The normal order of things is for merit to win the prize. And this normal order is actually verified in

a number of cases sufficient to encourage any one who cares to try and make his own case illustrate it once again. This is merely general ; but it must be borne in mind. I do not know that to men who fail there is any particular consolation in it. And, on the other hand, to speak out boldly the truth, that merit does not always succeed, too often acts like an infuriating red rag to the very people who have no merit at all. It encourages them to consider themselves victims when they are only nuisances, and they go on butting all the more at the barriers that will never fall before *their* style of attack.

Here, however, we must define. What is "success" ? What is your precise object in literature ? If it is money, immediate fame, or indeed fame at all, then you may be enabled, after a certain number of attempts, to say if you have succeeded, or, in any case, if success is probable. The same applies if your object is anything else that is immediately tangible, like a party movement or a social change for example. But the case becomes more difficult when we pass upwards from the ranks of the "Bread-Artist," as the Germans call him. Suppose a man has set his heart upon the production of poetry that will live, or the communication of a certain impulse to the thoughts or feelings of men. Here, we may affirm, to begin with, that, if he has once found an audience of much variety, genuine qualification is certain of *some* recognition. The *variety* in the audience is, however, essential if this is to hold true. Reason good : what is one man's meat is another man's poison ; and numbers of persons, though sensitive to merit of one kind, are insensitive to merit of another. But the effect a man produces as poet, thinker, or what not during his lifetime, is no gauge whatever of the value of his communications to the world ; that he is at once recognised by competent people proves that there is something in him ; but what may happen in the way of subsequent recognition is all dark. Spinoza, while living, was known for an able man, but his public and his influence have been immensely greater since his death, and the amount of his influence upon modern thought is utterly inscrutable. John Sterling has been much more influential since his death than he ever was during his life, so far as we can tell. But these are matters in which we never *can* "tell" much. So that no man who has found his capacity recognised need despair at what appears to him the limited character of the impression he has made. A clergyman named Gay lives in philosophy on the strength of a mere pamphlet, in which (what is called) the law of association is (said to be) first assigned its proper place. Waller, Richard Lovelace, Gray, Andrew Marvell, and others, are remembered chiefly by a few happy lines apiece.

"Give me but what this ribbon bound,  
Take all the rest the sun goes round."

It is this exquisite couplet which may be said to have kept Waller alive. It is an awkward thing to refer to living poets; but I believe that very small sweet fragments will keep Mr. William Allingham and some others in memory quite as long as Mr. Tennyson or Mr. Browning will be known.

The statement, so often repeated, and by people who ought to know better than to say such a misleading thing as that naked statement—I mean the *dictum* that capacity need never fear of failing to find prompt acceptance, inasmuch as editors are always on the lookout for fresh talent—is one that must be received with much qualification and reserve. It may be taken as a general rule that very special talent, amounting to genius, stands at first a bad chance, especially with periodicals. What chance would anything as new as Richter's "Hesperus" or Mr. Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" have with our ordinary magazine? The chances are a million to one that the editor, though able and good-natured, would reject it at once, as not being "suited" to his "pages." A reason which would perhaps be a sound one; yet nobody can tell till the trial is made what kind of public an eccentric intellectual product may find. We know what a hard fight a man like Mr. Browning has to wage before he wins his way to such a position that he is sure of being read; and it is precisely the same with eccentric capacity of a lower order. That also is under difficulties. Two or three kinds of capacity stand a good chance at once. First, brilliancy of a slightly *bourgeois* or "philistine" order. Ingoldsby is a case in point, and, irreverent though it seems, so is Dickens.\* Secondly, talent of the usual journalistic or magazine kind, combined with adequate culture and knowledge of the world. Third, effective power, not easily fatigued and quick to produce, of an order which happens to suit the market at the time. At this moment, for example, the talent of the journalist and the talent of the novelist are in great request. It cannot be said that the supply of either exceeds the demand.

But here is perhaps the place to say that no capacity of any kind can hope to succeed without preparatory study and self-culture directed to the precise end in view. Of this, however, we will say more in subsequent pages.

One of the reasons which tell against the mere outside adventurers is this—that every editor is surrounded by known and tried contributors, who now and then wish to recommend or bring forward others. Friendly feeling weighs with editors, like other people; and so it ought. You, the outsider and stranger, may send a fairly good paper to a given periodical; but unless it is very decidedly better than any which the literary adherents of the periodical, among whom are

\* This truth being spoken—for the truth it is—only dull people will disbelieve me when I add that it is impossible that any one should have a more intense feeling for the genius of Dickens than I have.



sure to be personal friends of its managers, why should the editor give you the preference? He may be ever so ready to give you a chance; but, alas, it is morally certain that he has arrears, perhaps six months long or more, of good articles from valued contributors, some of whom are pressing him, more or less gently, to give *them* a preference.

Besides this, there is the policy of the periodical to carry out, or its character to maintain. This is a matter upon which the managers must be the judges, without appeal; and they will mentally have their own notions of the way in which the subject-matter should be, so to speak, mixed or beaten-up. The nicest shade of difference or resemblance or relevancy or irrelevancy (with reference to other articles or to current topics) may determine the acceptance, the rejection, the insertion, or the delay of an article. Then, again, reasons of personal feeling often induce a kind and conscientious editor to "pack" his periodical in a manner which he would, for its immediate prosperity's sake, prefer to avoid. That is, he may feel it his duty—nay, even in rare cases, his interest—to insert articles which the general principles of his procedure would certainly exclude. He might know that the public had had too much, for instance, of the Irish Church question, and yet be in such a position with regard to the author of an article too-much on that subject as to feel that it would be unkind or even unfair to refuse that article. In fact, the considerations which determine the packing of a magazine are incalculably intricate.

The question of the value of personal influence in advancing the beginner who is attempting to find his way into literature, has always, so far as my reading goes, been untruthfully described. We have been constantly told that in literature introductions are of no use; merit everything. But why should literature be unlike any other thing under heaven in this respect? Put the case of obtaining an audience wholly irrespective of profit. Here, the speaking-trumpet that falls to a man's lot is of the very utmost moment. If he happens to have something strikingly appropriate to say of an immediately exciting topic, he has a chance of being able to get a good speaking-trumpet. I am thinking now of the "Letters of an Englishman," which, as far as I know, were at once admitted to the *Times* solely on the strength of their merit and their applicability. But it is very rarely that so many favourable conditions concur as happened to unite in that particular case. In ninety-nine instances out of a hundred the value of an introduction in getting a writer a good speaking-trumpet is immense. A celebrated name is a kind of introduction which will illustrate the subject very well. Mr. Matthew Arnold, for example, inherits a name which is historical, and which has all the effect of most powerful introductions. Apart from his genuine capacities and high culture, he has been immensely indebted,

as a political and social critic, to the speaking-trumpet—the *Pall Mall Gazette*—which personal accidents placed in his power. There was not another organ in the world in which his peculiar communications would have been welcomed and would have found, at once, so favourable and so large an audience. The *Pall Mall Gazette* was itself an accident, and the circumstances that gave him his speaking-trumpet were a sort of accident, and nothing else. For myself, while the most felicitous literary incident of my life was what people would call fortuitous as well—that is, I was indebted to no introduction for it—I assert that it is mere rant and fustian to deny the value of introductions in literary business matters. They will not procure success for bad work, but they give a particular piece of ordinary good work the exceptional chance which is necessary for the acquisition of a footing. And for business purposes that is everything. It is true, all this applies more to journalism than to other kinds of literary work. But this just covers the largest field of all, and the field in which the competitors are, upon a superficial view, the most nearly equal. Now, the hasty view which, alone, an overworked editor is able to take of the pretensions of a new-comer is necessarily superficial.

So very few persons have the requisite faculties for judging of poetry, that that is in a very peculiar position. Here, and in the better sorts of fiction, introduction can do—we may say—nothing. Perhaps a real gift for poetry, or a real gift for story-telling, is of all literary gifts the one that is most sure to find its own way. The number of persons who can tell a good story from a bad one is very considerable; so that though a new-comer, with startling peculiarities, may be snubbed here and there, the beginner in fiction, if really capable, stands a good chance. On the other hand, though the number of people who can tell poetry from mere good verse is few, it is easy, a certain degree of merit once reached, to get poetry printed. And then, the few who *do* know poetry, have a quick scent for it. So those who have cast bread upon the waters in that kind may rest tranquil—they have been, or will be, found out. Besides, though it costs something, it is not so *very* difficult to get a volume of poetry into print now-a-days. And poetry is, I repeat, almost certain to be found out by somebody. This remains true, in spite of the fact that there is sometimes a conflict of verdicts. The least competent and most adverse critic of Keats and Wordsworth would not have denied, upon being pressed, that the *differentia* of their minds was poetic; the rest, it will be observed, was mere matter of (what is called) taste. The radical question put by the man who thinks he sings is, "Do you acknowledge this for singing?" All the praise in the critic's ink-pot that does not go to this point should be held worthless; all the blame that admits this point may be borne with, however unjust or foolish.

The following passage is quoted from an American periodical of high standing :—

"Perhaps no taste differs more than literary taste. Men of trained judgment and rare culture differ from each other almost as much as the boor and the philosopher. This is shown in the popular magazines, not only occasionally, but constantly. What the *Galaxy* rejects, *Putnam* prints with entire readiness; the essay *Harper's* repudiates meets with favour in the *Atlantic*; and the poem the *Atlantic* 'declines with thanks' is published in the *Broadway*. Every month the editor of some one of the monthlies discovers in his rivals the manuscript he has returned to the owner, while he himself prints and praises what his contemporaries have pronounced unworthy. We know a very clever authoress—one of the most famous in the country—who sends her composition at one time, first to the *Atlantic*, then to *Harper's*, then to the *Galaxy*; the next time, first to the *Galaxy*, &c., just reversing the order. Some one of the serials usually rejects it, but another always accepts; and she says candidly she would not give a fig for the judgment of any of them. Concerning the taste of critics, who shall decide?"

This crude bit of comment may well be taken as an illustration of some of the foregoing hints. No doubt one magazine may reject what another will insert. Of course a religious Review might decline what a secular Review might welcome. But that is not all, or half; for the question goes far beyond "literary taste." The condition of the editor's pigeon-holes is a ruling element in the case. The *Galaxy* may reject a piece of "subjective" verse because it is already overdone with such matter, while *Putnam* may run short of it just then. Or, again, an article may be declined because if published in a particular magazine it might "take the edge off" an article or series of articles projected at the time. If an editor had engaged a well-known contributor to write for him a set of papers on a given topic, he would almost certainly decline to insert a casual paper on the same or a similar topic which happened to reach him at about the same date. In fact, there are a hundred, or a hundred thousand, ways in which a really good article may be "not suited to our pages."

There remains a most important subject; namely, that of the education or preparation for literary labour which one should in some way undergo before entering upon it. This, with the subject of what is called *cliqueism*, I beg leave to defer to a second chapter.